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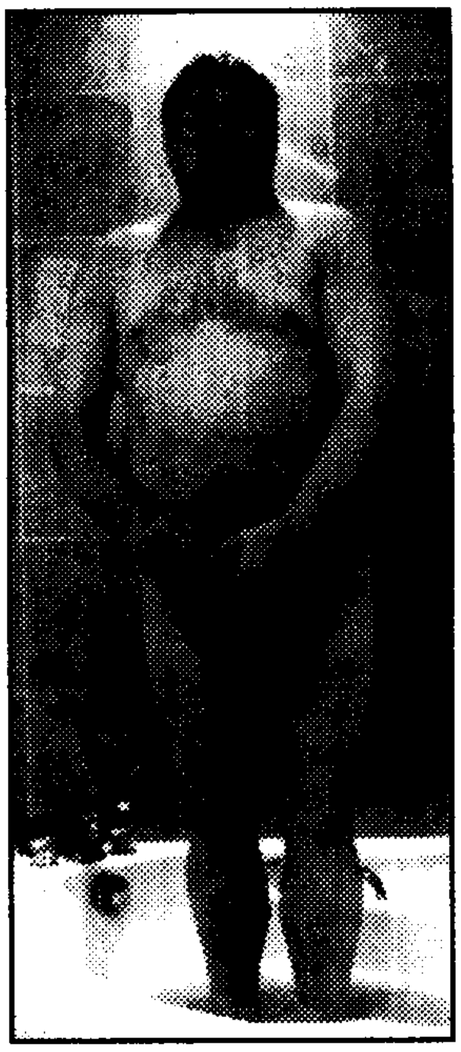

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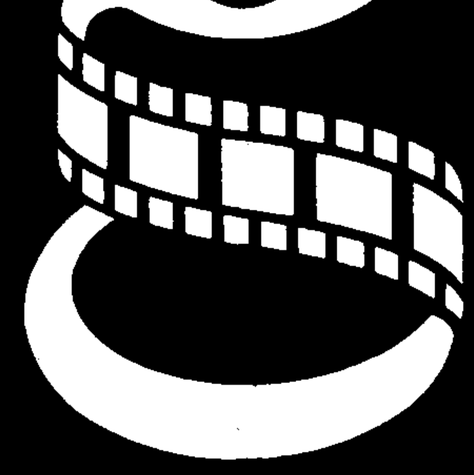

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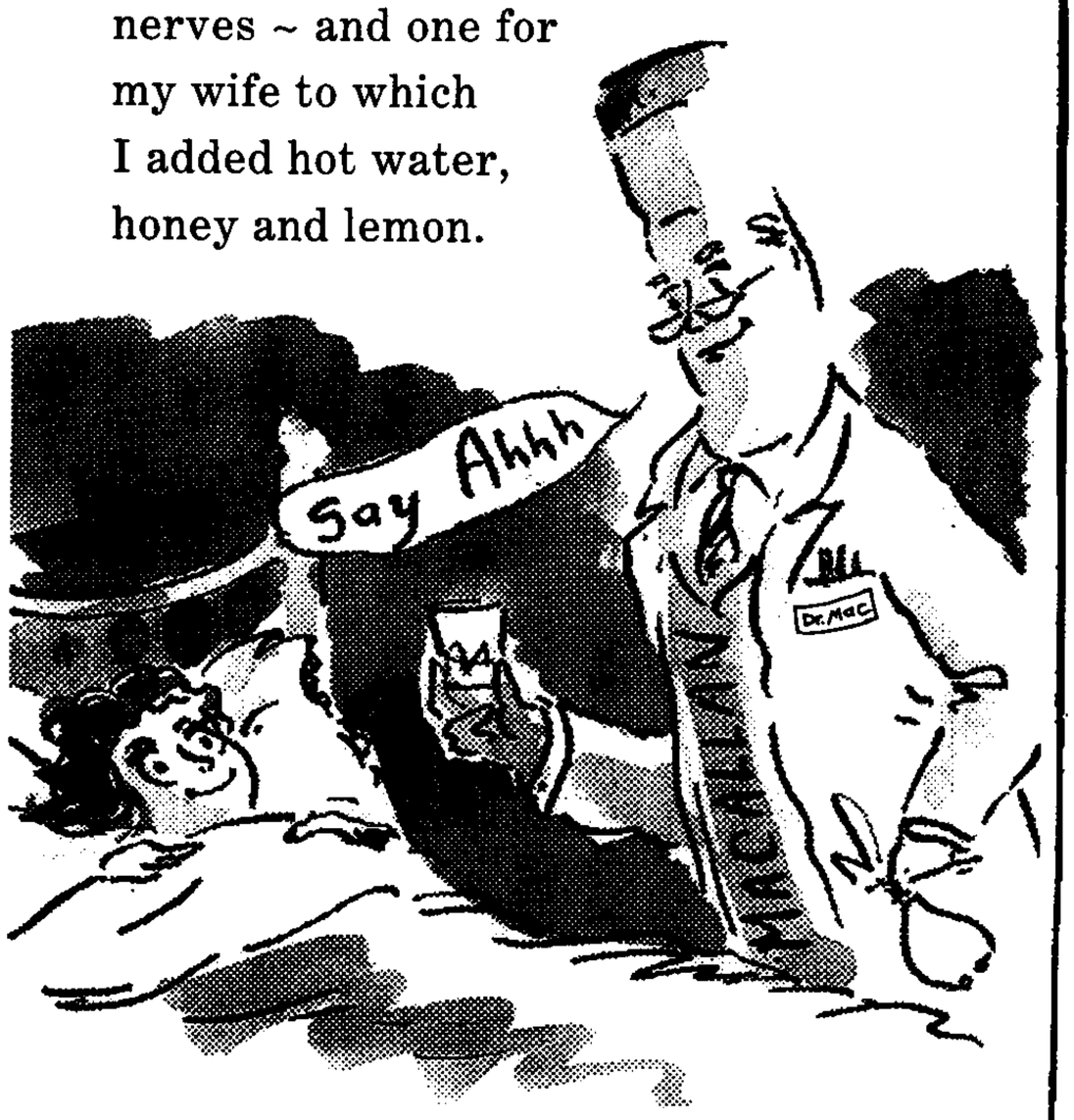
ATCHOO!

LAST WINTER, my wife was suffering from a snuffly cold, and before she went to bed asked me to make her a recuperative hot whisky toddy.

IMAGINE MY HORROR when I discovered that the bottle of 'cooking whisky' we normally kept was empty and the only alternative was my precious *10 year old* The Macallan Malt Whisky.

STILL, she had asked me for a toddy and the sacrifice had to be made. I poured two large measures of the sherry-gold elixir ~ one for myself to steel my nerves ~ and one for my wife to which I added hot water, honey and lemon.



SHE SIPPED IT with relish, and appeared to my eyes considerably the better for it the next day.

BUT NOT A BIT OF IT. "No change," she said that evening. "But we mustn't be impatient. It's important with medicine to *finish the course.*"

We are Indebted for Remedial Correspondence to Mr R. K. Ellis of Gosport, Hants.

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How can this government ignore their voices? Is this administration so heartless that it will merely let them suffer? Has compassion fatigue truly overtaken us all? Surely not.

That is why, as an ordinary member of a syndicate *(surely "the public"? E.S.)*, I am appealing to Downing Street to SAVE THE NAMES.

There is no more urgent matter on the agenda.

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COLOUR SECTION

WITH THE recent hysterical American tickertape parades celebrating victory in the Gulf still etched in the mind, Operation Desert the Kurds enters its second, and perhaps final bloody phase while the future for those Shi'ite refugees in southern Iraq looks no less grim.

The glorious allied victory — 147,000 dead; Kuwait on fire; millions still at the mercy of the mad butcher of Baghdad — is now being followed by inglorious retreat. The victory, if you believe the White House and its London office (Ten Downing Street), is a sound basis for peace in the Middle East. But not if you're a northern Iraqi Kurd or a southern Iraqi Shi'ite.

A leaked report from the United Nations reveals that rather than the substantial UN forces proposed by the Kurds' "saviour", John Major, the UN has some 50 security guards — essentially doormen — officially protecting a huge area which is "under de facto Pesh Merga control". The report rightly asks how long the Iraqi army "will hold its hand" in face of "serious attacks on all Iraqi installations in Dohuk".

Down south, meanwhile, UN documents claim that between 400,000 and 700,000 Shi'ites — who like the Kurds were incited to rise up against the Baathist Saddam only to be left in the mire by the allies — are contained in the marshes by Iraqi forces who control the Baghdad to Basra road which cuts them off from escape to Iran.

While the Baathists take a leaf out of the Pentagon's public relations book and call the new offensive against the refugees "Operation Rescue", the British Government's reaction, like that of the UN, has been to deny the existence of the report. And when Colin Powell arrived at Sirsenk in northern Iraq last month, the fearless chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff was no less mealy-mouthed. Landing at Saddam's personal airstrip where British squaddies continue to risk life and limb by digging our own cluster bombs out of the tarmac, Powell saw no disgrace in the allies' sounding the retreat.

Last weekend allied troops started crossing back into Turkey in earnest, where presumably they will reinforce the Turkish troops sealing the border to terrified Kurds, once again at the bountiful mercy of Uncle Saddam.

Hacks have of course been evacuating for weeks.

Pit stops via US air force helicopters bound for Diyarbakir — which boasts the nearest thing the region has to a well-stocked bar — have been a daily occurrence and many found little need to return. A subtle rewrite of the agency copy hanging in the press centre of the Otel Turistik seems to have satisfied foreign editors who lost the thread of the whole thing even earlier than their anointed ones on the ground.

Unlike the hacks, however, many allied soldiers — doubtless emboldend by the redundancy notices awaiting them at home — have become increasingly outspoken. They believe that withdrawal without giving the slightest guarantee of security to the Kurds, who themselves have been cajoled into returning to Iraq, is the inevitable result of a policy conceived and executed on the hoof. "Operation Provide Comfort, Operation Gallant Provider... it's all a load of baloney," one British campaigner said last week. "This has always been Mission Impossible — a fantasy dreamt up by the Captain Kirks in Washington and Whitehall."

The assumption is, of course, that there will be no one left to report the slaughter if and when it happens. But recognising that they are about to betray those whom they came to help, some allied officers are taking matters into their own hands. Significant quantities of small arms and ammunition have gone "missing" from US stores, while some Special Force officers are determined to stay on to train the guerrillas. "It's unfinished business. The least we can do is make sure they have the means to fight back this time," said one Dutch NCO.

WHEN William Casey, the crooked advertising executive President Ronald Reagan made head of the CIA and who masterminded the Iran-Contra fiasco — died in 1987, Reagan promptly named his successor as Robert Gates.

At that time the Iran-Contra scandal was much in the public eye and questions started to be asked in the Senate, Congress and even in the press about Gates's knowledge both as CIA deputy chief and as the president's security adviser of what had been going on in Irangate. Tactfully Gates stepped down and the greyer and safer William Webster got the job instead.

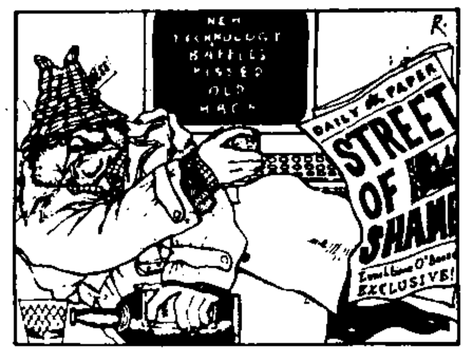
This was a pity, since it put a stop to a lot of public questions and answers about Gates's role in Iran-Contra. These would have pointed not only at the president's office, which was steeped so far in Iran-Contra that no one could rescue it, but also to Vice-President Bush's office. Gates, indeed, could have been of very special help to any inquisitive senator who asked the obvious question: how was it that the president's office (North, Poindexter etc) was able to conduct the whole complicated Iran-Contra operation without the vice-president and his close adviser Robert Allen, apparently knowing a thing about it?

Gates was specially close to Bush and he knew perfectly well not only that Bush had been up to his neck in Irangate (indeed, that the whole arms-for-hostages notion had originated in his office), but also that the "second line" of the presidential defence over Irangate was at all costs to "keep George out of it". In this strategy, Reagan and Bush were helped enormously by Senator Tower (whom Reagan appointed head of a commission to find out all the facts about Irangate); Robert Allen, who had once worked for an obscure right-wing senator called Dan Quayle; and Robert Gates, who reluctantly agreed to forego his life's ambition to be head of the CIA.

Bush named Dan Quayle as his vice-presidential running mate. As soon as he won the election, he named Senator Tower as his defence secretary (Tower only failed to get the job when it was proved he was too drunk — and he has since drunk himself to death); while Brent Scowcroft, another member of the three-man Tower Commission, was made national security adviser. His deputy was Robert Gates.

Now William Webster (rather mysteriously) has resigned from the directorship of the CIA. His successor? Robert Gates.

THATCHER IN U.S. LECTURE FEE SHOCK



EX-SAINTLY *Indie* **supremo Andreas Whittam-Strobes — or "Andy Smith" as he used to call himself in his younger days — now seems determined to prove that he can behave just as badly as any other press baron.**

One of his latest victims is Michael Church, arts editor of the *Sindie*. After constantly hearing rumours that he was about to be sacked, Church finally sought an audience with Strobes one evening. Don't worry, the great man assured him, your job is quite secure. Church emerged from the interview looking more cheerful than he had for weeks.

Not for long; the very next morning he was summoned by Strobes's hatchet-man, Richard Williams, and ordered to resign.

Williams issued the same command to feature-writer Ed Steen. Unlike Church, Steen refused to go quietly. He stormed into Strobes's office and demanded to know why he was being sacked. Don't worry, the great man assured him, you don't have to quit if you don't want to. However, Strobes then unleashed a fusillade of abuse at Steen, accusing him of having been a thorough nuisance ever since the paper started. Steen, who was the first hack to be recruited to the *Indie* way back in 1986 when Strobes was operating out of a broom cupboard, was so shaken by this onslaught that he resigned on the spot.

But there are signs that Strobes cannot quite cope with the consequence of his new Hannibal Lecter persona. He confided mournfully to one hack the other day that he had never really appreciated that people who are made "redundant" — such as the 35 *Indie* hacks who have been evicted by him in the past month — become jobless. It was, he said, a most upsetting discovery.

● Exciting plans to drop the eagle on the masthead of the *Indie on Sunday* have been shelved. The office joke runs that "it would cost too much to pay him off".

TWO foreign correspondents appear to have had uncannily similar experiences reporting the recent capture of Addis Ababa by rebel forces.

Writing in *The Times* on 29 May, Sam Kiley described how he had been present when rebel troops had captured a government soldier called Hergar Gherkhal. Kiley had spotted the soldier and reported this to a rebel unit: "He rose to kiss my hand in misplaced gratitude, in the belief that I had saved his life, when instead I had nearly ended it."

Then on 30 May, *The Indescribablyboring*'s Richard Dowden described a similar incident: "... he kissed my hands and thanked us pathetically for saving his life. His name was Kourade. In fact we had nearly got him killed."

ONLY A short while after Max "Hitler" Hastings reorganised the *Daily Torygraph*'s **Peterborough column, he has had to reorganise it again.**

In the first shake-up Peterbore's editor, Robert Hardman, was sent to Westminster to write parliamentary sketches, while his number two, Charles de Lisle, was offered, and took, redundancy.

Then the *Torygraph*'s obituaries editor, Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd, was offered the editorship of Peterbore in addition to his existing job. Sensing he was in a position to haggle over money, Massivesnob brought in his literary agent, the sinister Gillon Aitken, to negotiate for him. The *Eye* is not certain of Massivesnob's final agreed salary, but the figure of £75,000 has been mentioned.

Massivesnob began his exciting new role by filling the column with deeply tedious stories about the aristocracy and by allowing Petronella Wyatt (daughter of Thatcher toady, Lord Wyatt of Weeford) to pen a series of mini-profiles of celebrities. These were illustrated with a large caricature of the celebrity and when they started, did not mention the name of the celebrity at all. Hastings correctly opined that this was a silly affectation, so they thereafter mentioned the name of the subject, but not until the last line. Now, they have come round to mentioning the name in the first line.

The new-look Peterbore has been such an abysmal failure that Massivesnob has had to resign, thus falling back to his salary as morgue reporter. Meanwhile, Charles de Lisle has been asked not to take his redundancy money but to take back his old job, and garrulous cherub Quentin Letts has been called back from the New York office to take charge of the rudderless ship.

While in Washington, Letts was in a line of British foreign correspondent who were presented to HM The Queen. When Brenda asked Letts if he would be staying in America, the hack replied that he would be returning to London to edit Peterbore. The Queen was not amused. The column had once been her favourite reading, she explained, but alas, it had gone dreadfully downhill in the last three years and as for the last three weeks — well, it had hit rock bottom.

Letts now has the entertaining challenge of trying to ensure that "Hitler" obtains a knighthood.

AS SOON as the last *Eye* **reached Wapping,** *Today* **editor Martin Dunn called in features executive Juliet Warman — whose finger-in-the-till activities were revealed in it — and urged her to sue.**

She agreed, snorting with righteous indignation at the *Eye*'s description of her as a "felon". A felon is a convicted criminal, she said, whereas she had never been convicted of anything. She would win huge damages.

This happy reverie was shattered when *Toady*'s ex-diarist Chris Hutchins produced a dictionary which defined felon merely as "criminal", without any mention of convictions. "You can't possibly sue them for calling you a criminal," he told the killer bimbo, "because you are one."

Meanwhile, a copy of the *Eye* piece was faxed by a Wapping grandee to Rupert Murdoch. While awaiting his verdict, Warman and her husband Viv Ashworth — his wallet no doubt flush with the News International money which she had diverted to him — flew off for a week's holiday in the Bahamas, apparently without a care in the world.

IN A LETTER to the *Grauniad* **last week, former** *Punch* **editor William "Kaiser Bill" Davis criticised the magazine's present editor, David Thomas. "Does he ever ask himself," Davis asked smugly, "why the circulation has fallen so dramatically?"**

Kaiser Bill went on to contrast the present enfeebled state of the mag with its great success in his day. "It was during my editorship," he revealed, "that circulation rose to a post-war high of 125,000."

Er, up to a point. Davis took over in 1969, and the circulation that year was indeed 125,000. What he forgot to mention was that, under his inspired leadership, it immediately went into a steep decline from which it has never recovered: 110,000 by the end of 1970, 101,000 by 1972, 86,000 in 1975 and 79,000 in 1977. He then resigned.

EVE POLLARD, the former *Sunday Mirror* **editor who last month took charge of the** *Sunday Express*, **has admitted that she would happily use her position to wangle free holidays for her children and her secretary. She thinks there is "nothing wrong with that".**

The admission came while she was being cross-examined at a London industrial tribunal two weeks ago, during the unfair dismissal case brought against her by a former assistant editor at the *Sunday Mirror*, Peter Miller (see recent *Eyes passim*).

Miller was suspended on 2 November last year, after which a team of *Sunday Mirror* hacks — led by features editor Charles Golding and investigations editor Steve Bailey — was commissioned by Bollard to find evidence that might justify his dismissal. On 17 November he was then sacked.

As Miller's counsel suggested to Bollard: "Having got him off the premises, you now set out to get journalists on journalists, setting out to dig up as much as you could on Peter Miller."

The "dirt" in question failed to impress the tribunal. Before Miller had even gone into the witness box, the chairman announced that he and his colleagues had heard enough: he stopped the case, announcing that the treatment of Miller by Bollard and Robert Maxwell had been manifestly unfair. (The *Daily Mirror*, fair as ever, reported the next day that the case was lost on "a technicality".) Miller is now entitled to compensation of up to £13,000.

One of the handfuls of "dirt" dug up by Bailey and Golding was the fact that, in the mid-1980s, Miller had offered some PR advice to a travel firm called Crystal Holidays for which he had been paid the handsome sum of £125. Bailey had then conducted a survey which showed that, of the 11 references to Crystal Holidays in national newspapers between 1983 and 1990, five had been in the *Sunday Mirror*. The obvious inference was that the paper was plugging Crystal disproportionately because of Miller.

"Would it surprise you," Miller's counsel, Simeon Maskrey, asked Bollard, "to learn that Bailey's list is hopelessly inaccurate?"

"Yes, because Steve Bailey's a jolly good reporter," she replied.

Maskrey then produced dozens of press cuttings about Crystal Holidays which had appeared in other papers during the relevant period. Eventually, a humiliated Bollard agreed that the list compiled by her "investigations editor" was worthless.

Other charges against Miller seemed equally rickety. One, which provoked much sniggering in court, was that last autumn Miller had allowed a picture of Mickey Mouse wearing a hard hat to be used on a feature about Eurodisney — without permission from the Disney organisation. "You may laugh about hard hats on Mickey Mouse," Lady Lloyd said tetchily, "but they see that as a very serious infringement of their copyright." She agreed that Miller hadn't actually been in charge of pictures, nor had he been responsible for the feature. Nevertheless, she felt it merited his "instant dismissal".

La Bollard cut a wretched figure in the witness box, constantly earning rebukes from Maskrey for her failure to answer questions. Nor did she impress the bench with her inability to return punctually after adjournments. "I'm sorry," the tribunal chairman announced impatiently after one intermission, "we seem to have lost Miss Pollard again." She was egged on during her evidence by the bow-tied Charlie Golding, who was signalling and mouthing at her like a football coach on the touchline. At lunchtime Golding and Bollard went off together in the back of her chauffeur-driven limo.

However, his loyalty to his amply-proportioned ex-boss is not absolute. At one point, Golding leaned across to the *Eye*'s reporter and told him to vacate his seat to make way for Bollard when he finished giving evidence. (All the other seats were taken.) "That's all right," the *Eye* man replied, "she can sit on my lap." Golding looked revolted. "Rather you than me," he said with a grimace.

This is the second recent legal *débâcle* involving Golding, much to the embarrassment of Bollard and Mirror Group Newspapers. (Earlier this year his libel suit against the *Eye* ended with him — or Cap'n Bob — having to pay both sides' costs.) His chances of landing a senior post at Lady Lloyd's exciting new *Sunday Express* must be dwindling fast.

Andreas
JOHN KENT
INDEPENDE
UNEMPLOYMENT IS GOING TO BE THE BIG ISSUE OVER THE COMING MONTHS
AS A CARING AND RESPONSIBLE NEWSPAPER WE OUGHT TO HIGHLIGHT THE PLIGHT OF SUCH UNFORTUNATES
YOU'RE RIGHT.
BY THE WAY, WHERE IS EVERYONE?
INDEPENDENT
YOU SACKED THEM.

THE Liverpool Walton by-election caused by the death of Eric Heffer promises to make Alan Bleasedale's portrayal of a "fictitious northern city" in his new series *GBH* look like *The Darling Buds of May*.

Murkeyside's raving Spartists, themselves intent on doing serious GBH to the Labour Party leadership, turned Heffer's funeral into a political demo. Kinnock's local bruiser Peter Kilfoyle was hissed and booed by the rent-a-crowd, forcing Doris Heffer to disassociate herself from Militant attempts to claim Eric for their own. But at least his funeral went ahead: the next day the G&M announced a gravediggers' overtime ban for other grieving families in the city.

The truth, of course, is that St Eric despised the Militant comrades and on several occasions in the 1980s tried to convene coteries of mainstream Labour worthies in Liverpool to deal with the Militant infestation. Heffer's famous flounce-out during Kinnock's Labour conference speech denouncing the Hattonistas' delivery of redundancy notices by taxi was mainly prompted because no one had consulted him about the attack.

Alas, while hating them, St Eric also feared the comrades; but Militant control of his local party — and reselection — ensured his compliance. When Tony Benn (ironically the eulogist at Heffer's funeral) was standing in the Labour leadership elections, Eric was part of a group who doubted his stability. Heffer agreed to stand against him — but to the chagrin of all his fellow plotters backed down. "My constituency party [read *Militant*] won't let me," the great Crusader confessed.

Meanwhile the summer of discontent in Liverpool is well underway, with scousers awaiting plagues of rats and flies as garbage mounts and the redundancy-threatened council security staff prove their worth by guarding the dozen or so emergency rubbish dumps set up as a scenic feature in city parks.

As Kinnock and Co say in public that they are pleased the Spartists are standing under their own colours, in private they know only too well how damaging Walton will be for Labour's electoral revival. Behind the scenes at the G&M conference a leading official tried to persuade Ian "Gnashers" Lowes (*Eye* 766) to use his influence to stop the Broad Left standing a candidate. He was offered the promise of the withdrawal of all redundancy notices in exchange.

Militant have accused Harry Rimmer, the Liverpool city council leader, of being a "Stalinist". This is far from the image he presented on *Newsnight* — breaking down in tears to camera as he recounted months of Spart-inspired torment. And despite presenting Leslie Mahmood as the soft-spoken "single-parent" candidate, the local electorate are all too aware of the bully-boy elements backing her campaign. There will be more of them on the streets than Labour canvassers and physical confrontation is inevitable.

Walton voters may well say a plague on both your houses as Labour tears itself apart, leaving the way open for the Liberal Democrats to come through the middle. It will be interesting to see if Kinnock can live this one down as he did over Glasgow Govan: the Tories could still be thanking Derek Hatton's sometime associates for helping them get re-elected.

THE devastating critique of the economic consequences of a Labour victory by Goldman Sachs must have been deeply embarrassing for the firm's chief UK economist, Gavyn Davies.

Not only is Davies Neil Kinnock's most important unofficial economic adviser, but he is also married to Kinnock's secretary, Sue Nye. Although he was not, of course, the author of the report, he has criticised one aspect of Labour policy.

In a recent article in the *Sunday Torygraph*, where he is the resident economics guru, he asked if it really was a good idea to abolish the upper limit on employee national insurance contributions and raise the top rate of income tax to 50 percent.

WHILE the sacking of Thatch has caused all kinds of trouble in her beloved "think tanks" — especially at the Institute of Economic Affairs — revelations in the last *Eye* that IEA bosses are worried its close relations with the Tory Party might endanger its "charity" status have caused no end of anguish at its posh offices in Lord North Street.

The unease revolves around Graham Mather, the IEA's security-conscious director-general and the problem came to a head last March when he publicly rebuked economists who had written to the *Times* warning of a 1930s-style slump unless interest rates were cut instantly. On 12 March, Mather told a meeting of the Shadow Monetary Policy Group, a Thatcherite organisation, that the economists "risked destroying the Government's credibility just when Norman Lamont is on the verge of a breakthrough".

Since the leading dissident was none other than Thatcher's economic guru Sir Alan Walters, Mather's comments were bound to be answered from her camp. Sure enough, Patrick Minford of Liverpool University and a raving Thatcherite, was soon in the fray, demanding that Mather be removed and insisting that the institute stay loyal to Thatcherism, not the Government.

On 6 May, Lord Harris of High Cross, Arthur Seldon and John Wood, founder presidents of the institute and all Thatcherites, wrote to the *Times* proclaiming the institute's faith in "the search for truth, not some ephemeral calculation of political expediency". The tone of the letter suggested that the founders of the IEA were not at all happy about Mr Mather's less than critical approach to John Major. Mather hit back and the public row fizzed on. Behind the scenes, Harris, Minford and Co are desperately trying to ensure the continued integrity of the institute, by which they mean its loyalty to Thatcherite principles, while Mather resists them, claiming that success and influence will come much more through close association with Ten Downing Street.

In the meantime, the institute itself is plagued by labour problems. The long-serving marketing manager, John Raybould, has been made redundant. The terms of the redundancy were extremely miserly until Raybould threatened to take the case to an industrial tribunal. The case would have been extremely embarrassing for Mather, who was legal adviser to the maverick employer George Ward during the Grunwick dispute in the late 1970s and chief researcher at the Thatcherite Institute of Directors in the mid-eighties. The idea that a constructive unfair dismissal case against one of his own officers might oblige Mather to attend the industrial tribunals he has denounced so often in the past was not a happy one, and Mr Raybould's settlement deal has been substantially improved.

It is not certain, however, that this will help very much. Two other senior men at the institute are not altogether delighted with their new jobs. They are Dr Cento Veljanowski, appointed by Mather to succeed IEA founder Arthur Seldon as editorial director; and Keith Miles, replacement for John Wood as director of finance and administration. Martin Anderson, the ebullient editor of the institute's journal, *Economic Affairs*, has left to join the OECD, and other competent researchers have left in his wake.

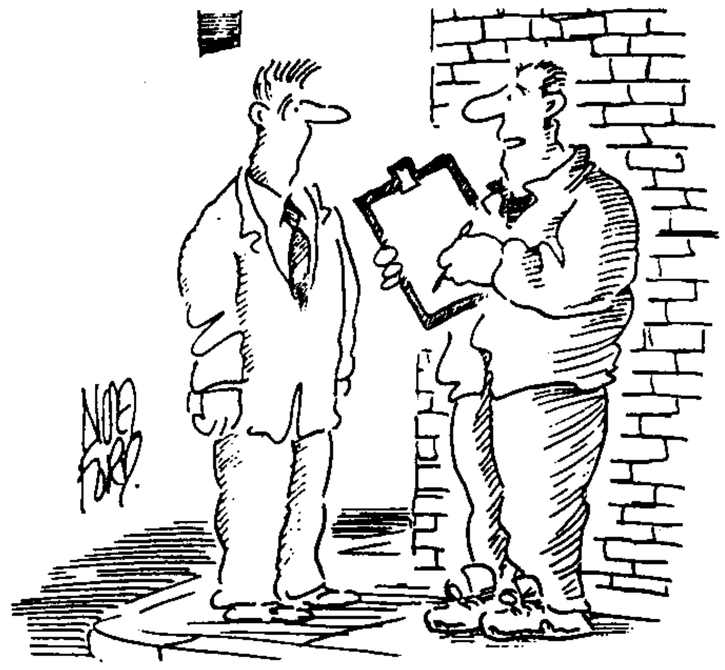
THOSE in the Labour Party hierarchy who hoped Peter Mandelson's nomination as prospective parliamentary candidate for distant Hartlepool would free party headquarters from his attentions are continually being disappointed.

The sacking of John Underwood, Labour's popular press officer, has widely been ascribed to Underwood's qualms about Mandelson's "presidential" style of press relations, the central purpose of which is to portray Neil Kinnock as the most dynamic Wonderboy since John Kennedy.

Colin Byrne, Underwood's replacement as the Labour Party's chief press officer, has had a far from distinguished career.

After a spell at the Automobile Association, Byrne became Mandelson's gofer at the Walworth Road HQ. His star momentarily appeared to fall when he served as press officer during the disastrous Glasgow Govan by-election (the SNP romped home), yet when the General & Municipal Workers found Mandelson his safe seat, Byrne was his chosen successor.

However, the party's national executive committee chose Underwood instead. As loyal servant to a new patron, Byrne's own PR efforts continued to be embarrassing — a face covered with egg, for example, for setting up a "London victory



"This won't take a moment, Sir. Would you, (a) prefer to hand over your cash and credit cards peaceably or, (b) be smashed over the head with a cast-iron clipboard?"

news conference" for 4 May 1990, the day after Labour was routed in Wandsworth and Westminster. But he performed to the highest standards in clearing Underwood's path out of Walworth Road.

Byrne set up house in Bloomsbury with Mandelson and Julie Hall, Kinnochio's press secretary, and passed the telphone number around the lobby — that would be the place, not Underwood's office, where the hacks should go for their stories. At Walworth Road, Byrne reorganised the office furniture so that Underwood's desk faced the wall.

When Underwood appointed Sally Anne Lomas as a broadcasting officer, Byrne decided to undermine her position as well. She only lasted a month after being told by Byrne that he knew television better than she did.

Eventually Underwood obtained the agreement of Larry Whitty to move Byrne out of the press office, but Julie Hall (by now Byrne's fiancée) nobbled Kinnock and the decision was reversed, prompting Underwood's resignation.

JOHN "Brylcreem" Browne, the sitting Tory MP for Winchester, is still intending to fight his seat even though the local Conservative Association has selected another candidate, Gerald Malone, to stand in his place.

Last year most local Tories were relieved when Browne announced that he did not intend to put his name forward for reselection following his supension from the House for failing to declare business interests. Now, in a letter to the *Hampshire Chronicle* 14 months later, he denies that this was a final decision and accuses the local association of behaving undemocratically. He believes that, since he was elected by the people in 1987, they, and not a small group of party activists, should be his judge.

Prominent in the campaign to reselect the tarnished MP has been one Ray Feek, a local businessman with an interesting history. A licensed trade consultant who runs Innkeepers Information Services, in the past Feek has had several county court debt judgements against him and in 1989 was investigated by the police when the Winchester Heath district sports and social club, of which he was treasurer, went bust owing thousands of pounds. No charges were brought.

HARRIET HARMAN, Labour MP for Peckham and health guru, has been behaving so furtively recently she is clearly in training for the day she sits on the government benches.

Harperson has obtained a copy of the highly sensitive business plan of the controversial Guy's Trust, but is being extremely coy about whom she shows it to.

No doubt Guy's suave chief executive Sir Peter Griffiths is delighted by her reticence; but the local health watchdog, the Lewisham and North Southwark Community Health Council, is less happy. It has been after the plan for months and was delighted to learn that Harperson had been leaked a copy. Unfortunately, she refuses to let the council see it.

It is even said that Robin Cook's office has not been allowed access to a copy, while Harperson has seen fit to produce two press releases containing small and mystifying quotes from the leaked document. Frustrated health watchdogs and other trust watchers hope more is on the way.

'Backbiter'

Grovel

CHATTING with John Major after the Trooping of the Colour, our conversation turns to his predecessor and I am fascinated to learn the name of the literary agent Lady Thatcher has chosen to represent her interests in the sale of her forthcoming memoirs.

The choice is entirely in keeping with the Iron Lady's belief in the free market and the chill winds of international competition. For, no longer officially obliged to "bat for Britain", she has shunned these shores and entrusted her prestigious work to someone called Marvin Josephson of International Creative Management Inc in New York.

Even though no one I've spoken to has ever heard of Mr Josephson, no doubt he will be well placed to build on the already huge fees Thatch is earning on her stateside lecture tours.

I AM GLAD to report that the rolypoly Zulu, Chief Buthelezi, whose supporters always seem to get the backing of the South African police in their bloody clashes with the African National Congress, can rely on some top flight support here in Britain too.

Who are his supporters? you ask. None other than casino millionaire John Aspinall, whose enthusiasm for zoos appears to extend to Zulus; Marc Gordon, the unimaginably right-wing chairman of the International Freedom Foundation; and my old chum Sir James Goldsmith, a grocer.

Chief Buthelezi was the "guest of honour" at a dinner hosted by Aspinall last November in London at which Goldsmith and Gordon were also present. Admiration of the Three White Men for their new hero seems unbounded: Aspinall is said to have given his son an authentic Zulu shield for his birthday.

● *THE REWARD for Christopher Harding, chairman of British Nuclear Fuels, for having avoided (so far as we know) any embarrassing nuclear disasters over the past year, was a knighthood in the Queen's birthday honours list.*

However, no sooner had Christopher been gonged than Scottish Nuclear announced its decision to stop sending its spent radioactive fuel to his Sellafield plant for reprocessing. Instead the waste will be stored at the power stations — a policy which is not only safer and cheaper, but one that has been advocated for 10 years by Friends of the Earth and of course regularly rejected by the nuclear industry. How embarrassing!

I AM GREATLY tickled by a photograph in the *Grauniad* of the Labour Party's prospective parliamentary candidate for Hampstead, Ms Glenda Jackson.

In it the tremendously earnest Jackson clutches a cardboard box to launch National Sleep Out Week, which has the entirely laudable aim of raising money for the homeless.

But what kind of box is Glenda clasping? Is it a dog-eared and tatty Tesco variety of the sort many dossers would be happy to call home? No it isn't.

The box in question, according to the legend on the side, used to house a pair of Bowers and Wilkins Matrix 801 loudspeakers which cost a staggering £3,375 a pair. No doubt the box came from the dustbin of one of Glenda's left-wing friends in Hampstead, where all good socialists need such hi-fidelity to listen to their Billy Bragg LPs.

Pseuds Corner

The recession hasn't hit Scotland as hard as the South East but I'm trying to make my pheasant shooting break even by letting more days.

The Duke of Atholl
Harper's & Queen

One weekend when we were in our favourite apartment in Ventana, Steve told me excitedly that some of his Hell's Angels pals were planning a run through Big Sur, on the California coast. He was going to meet them at the River Inn and 'hang out'. Would I like to come? I preferred to listen to Mozart in our room high up in the redwoods, and I spent the afternoon embroidering antique buttons on to sleeves of an Afghan ceremonial dancing shirt.

Ali McGraw
Moving Pictures

...a new science of the text must be developed whereby what Terence called 'good poems' and 'great novels' are broken down into such constituent elements as General Mode of Production (GMP), Literary Mode of Production (LMP) General Ideology (GI), Authorial Ideology (AuI) and Aesthetic Ideology (AI). The chemist can then get to work: "A double-articulation GMP/GI-GI/AI/LMP is, for example, possible, whereby a GI category, when transformed by AI into an ideological component of LMP, may then enter into conflict with the GMP social relations it exists to reproduce." This sort of thing established Terry's reputation as the country's leading Marxist literary theorist.

Jonathan Bate on Terry Engleton
London Review of Books

All of Bob Dylan's songs are carved from the bones of ghosts and have myth and vision... Desolation Row, From a Buick 6, Ballad in Plain D, Restless Farewell, Visions of Johanna, Boots of Spanish Leather, Dark Eyes. For me, Sad-Eyed Lady of the Lowlands is a grand song. It is like Beowulf and it 'takes me out to the meadow'.

This song can make you leave home, work on the railway, or marry a Gypsy. I think of a drifter around a fire with a tin cup under a bridge remembering a woman's hair. The song is a dream, a riddle and a prayer.

Tom Waits
The Guardian

Punch had to change. "Call it creeping illiteracy if you like," says Peter York, brought in as marketing consultant last year, "but the new magazine consumer wants bites. Now everybody reads bites, not just dummies. Everybody grazes, in media terms." Nobody understands the trend better than Thomas, says York, because "he's been through it all. From high groovy to deep rockist. David really understands that thirtysomething ethic."

The Guardian

CONTRIBUTORS: John Wardle, David Booth, David Holbrook, Neville White, A.P.R.

£10 paid for entries

I HEAR of an outrageous act of [illegible] by the membership committee of the Groucho Club.

Sir Ralph Halpern, who has been wondering how to spend his many leisure hours since his forced retirement as boss of Debenhams, was put up for membership. For some curious reason, the proposition met with a frosty response from those basilisk maidens who do service on the membership committee, Jane Bingham-Carter (fondly known as "Bunking Harder") and Nigella Lawson, the celebrity socialist, who decided to turn him down.

I am reliably informed that they do not consider five times a night to be too much for a gentleman.

"I'm sorry, Cat, novelty fiddle-players are two-a-penny."

● *I AM MUCH saddened to hear of the professional demise of Nick Rosen, the nephew of Cap'n Bob who had an enviable job on the European, doing very little but going anywhere to do it.*

About two weeks ago Nick arrived at Gatwick for a Britannia airways flight to Sicily. When he boarded the plane he was tired and emotional, but still demanded refreshment. When it was denied him, he opened a bottle of duty free whisky and topped it up with coke (sic).

As the flight approached Palermo, Nick apparently became increasingly agitated and had to be restrained by crew and passengers. As a result, the first landing was aborted and the touch down was only safely executed when Nick was well and truly strapped in.

Not unnaturally, Inspector Knacker wanted to interview him, and after a few cuffs around the head, to make Nick respectful of his authority, he was taken in. His one allowed call was regrettably not made to his lawyer, but to a local car hire company who was into a car that he poured himself on his release. Not a lot further down the road, he was stopped by the same Italian police and breathalysed.

The police were unforgiving at this additional trouble, and promptly threw him out of the country. Sadly, he has also now been thrown out of his uncle's newspaper.

WHILE Octopus snaps up 30 percent of my old chum Sir Sincere Stevenson's [illegible] publishing outfit, along with the right to acquire the imprint wholesale if it goes under completely, Sir Sinclair seems supremely unperturbed. Indeed, while publishing in general is in deep crisis, Sir Sinclair is in deepest Venice for two weeks to celebrate his wife's 50th birthday. Who said the days of the gentleman publisher were over?

Pip [illegible]

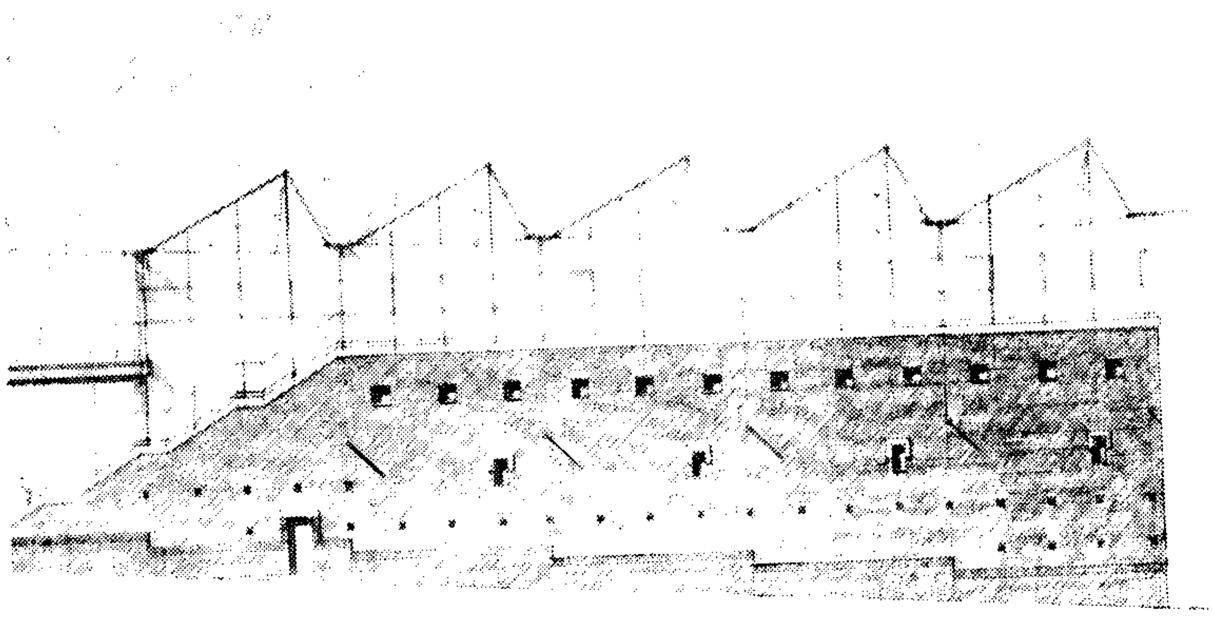
NOOKS and CORNERS

FIRE IS a terrible thing: last week it destroyed the old Palace Hotel in Princes Street, Edinburgh, although nobody was hurt as the building had been empty for years while the future of its prominent and valuable site was considered.

Built in 1888, the hotel was no great shakes as architecture but, as the authors of the *Buildings of Scotland* volume noted, it was: "Strong and highly to be prized for its picturesque silhouette". So it was a listed building. But now, of course, it cannot be saved. Something new can rise on the site. Every cloud has a silver lining. Or do I mean, no smoke without fire?

Glasgow seems to be more inflammable than Edinburgh. On 20 May an astonishing article appeared on the back page of the *Glasgow Herald*. Entitled "Fire spreads like an epidemic in the tinderbox city. International investors build on the ashes of Glasgow's heritage", it was written by Murray Ritchie and told the sad story of 72-74 Broomielaw, a listed building by the Clyde which had been restored in the mid-1970s as part of the rehabilitation of the city centre. Unfortunately, sites in the Broomielaw have now become much more valuable as new office buildings like tinpot Atlantic Quay designed by BDP are rising, financed by Japanese money through Glasgow Oriental Developments, known as GOD.

GOD has been buying up property all over Broomielaw. Offers were made to the owners of the flats in the old stone building of 1840; they were declined.



MY ILLUSTRATION does not show a fire-damaged warehouse. It is, in fact, a design for a new record office in Winchester, to be made of red brick, lead and glass, by Colin Stansfield-Smith, architect to Hampshire County Council and this year's winner of the RIBA's Royal Gold Medal for Architecture. Actually, I rather like it.

Then, last year, following heavy pile-driving for Atlantic House, the restored building was found to be unsafe. To cut a long story short, the flat owners were told to move everything out in March and on 8 April a fire broke out at night in the roof area of the locked up, empty four-storey building. What remains is now doomed and will be replaced by a six-storey office block for which plans already existed.

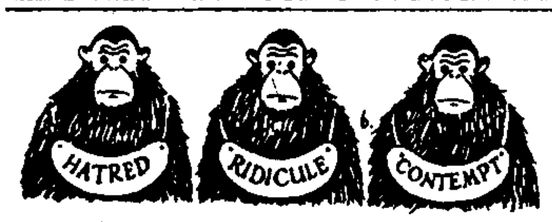
Mr Ritchie wrote: "Two aspects of the fire raised suspicions. First, it appeared to be remarkably convenient for all parties involved... Second, the fire was just another in a long series which has reached almost epidemic proportions in Glasgow since the onset of the recession." Strathclyde Fire Brigade reports that there were 1,920 cases of wilful fire-raising last year and Strathclyde police consider that wilful and malicious fire-raisings have increased by up to 20 percent already this year. Not that anyone is suggesting that the fire in Broomielaw is anything other than a tragic accident, an act of God...

Goodness knows how Mr Ritchie's article got past the lawyers, but the trouble with writing such things is that it gives people ideas. The day it was published, a major fire broke out in Union Street. This was in a listed, partly occupied, Victorian commercial block for which redevelopment proposals had been made. The facade, in one of Glasgow's handsomest streets, has now been partly taken down and the future of the building looks bleak. Since then, another fire has occurred in Union Street while, last week, the fire brigade was called out to deal with a fire in Pollokshields West Church. This building, with its magnificent steeple, is now redundant and was recently bought by a developer. Glasgow is full of empty, rotting, vulnerable historic buildings...

Now, of course, incendiary forms of development control are not unique to the European City of Culture for 1990. In Chicago recently a building by the great Louis Sullivan was destroyed by fire the day after it had been registered as a "landmark". And when the redevelopment of London's Docklands was first mooted, a number of mysterious fires broke out in old warehouses. Several were in St Katherine's Dock, now the "World Trade Centre", and others in London Dock eventually made way for Murdoch's Fortress Wapping. Nevertheless, Glasgow-type fires now seem rare in London. Penalties for arson are severe and neither local authorities nor English Heritage look favourably on replacement proposals for fire-damaged listed buildings. They are more likely to insist on complete reinstatement.

Reinstatement is expensive. Perhaps if the firebugs knew that that was the only option, Glasgow might become less flammable. What is surely needed is a prominent test-case — Historic Scotland and Glasgow District Council please note, before it is too late.

'Piloti'



LIBEL NEWS

LAST week's *New Statesman* carried a long editorial denouncing the Bruges Group for suing the magazine for libel.

"There is an increasing, and disturbing, propensity for people involved in politics to seek to resolve differences through the mechanism of the libel suit," it thundered. "For... publications without the resources to mount costly defences in court, the mere threat of an action acts as a gagging writ."

But the brave old *Staggers* wouldn't be gagged: "We do not seek to silence our political rivals; nor will we be silenced by them." If the Bruges Group won, its only achievement would be "to secure the bankruptcy of the magazine, and to narrow the range of freedom of political expression".

These stirring words raised some guffaws at the office of a gay weekly called the *Pink Paper*. For that very week, after almost 12 months of inactivity, the *New Statesman* had revived its libel action against the paper. If the *Pink Paper* loses, it will be bankrupted. Its staff may even lose their homes; the *NS*'s solicitors, Bindman & Co, have said they will require "the enforced sale of property if need be".

The man behind the lawsuit is the ever-litigious Duncan "Dunky" Campbell, who is now chairman of the *NS*'s board. His action was prompted by a *Pink Paper* article in October 1989 which criticised him for his hostility to an AIDS self-help group. Not content with suing for libel, Campbell and the *NS* obtained an injunction which bans the *Pink Paper* or its staff from making "any statement... suggesting that the plaintiffs have pursued the action from motives of censorship". A gagging writ, in other words, which prevents the defendants from calling it a gagging writ — a splendid bit of legal bullying.

Nor was that all. Dunky became convinced (quite wrongly) that the *Pink Paper* article had been written by Alan Beck, a lecturer at the University of Kent who contributes to the paper. As well as naming Beck as a co-defendant in his writ, Campbell sent a malicious letter to the university authorities claiming that Beck often lured his young male students to the offices of the *Pink Paper*.

Piling on the pressure, last July the *NS* applied to the high court to have *Pink Paper*'s defence struck out. But the ploy failed and costs were awarded against the *Staggers*. Since then the case has lain dormant, and the *Pink Paper*'s lawyers assumed it had been abandoned — until last week.

ONE of the year's most exciting libel actions is coming up soon. Two British military officers, Christopher Mackenzie Geidt and Anthony de Normann (*sic*), are suing Central Television over John Pilger's programme last year entitled *Cambodia: The Betrayal*.

They were referred to in the programme by Labour MP Ann Clwyd, who said she'd been surprised to meet them in Pnomh Penh, Cambodia's capital, at a function where they were officially described as representatives of the Ministry of Defence. The officers complain that their being named in such a controversial programme suggested that they themselves had been responsible for training Khmer Rouge terrorists in the Cambodian war.

What worries security chiefs is the liberal way in which Central TV has splashed round its subpoenas, calling to court all sorts of high-ups in intelligence and the SAS. If these are called, they will find it difficult to plead Crown privilege (that they should not, in the public interest, be obliged to give evidence), since the case is being brought by British military officers and hinges on their alleged role or otherwise in the SAS and with British Intelligence. The SAS is said to be especially worried that vital secrets may be forced into the open in an irrelevant libel case.

MUSIC NEWS

ALTHOUGH Northern Ballet Theatre has finally launched a show — *Romeo and Juliet* — which both the critics and punters like, all is far from well in the depths of the orchestra pit.

Christopher Gable, the megalomaniac artistic director, has incorporated mayhem fight scenes in which the corps of male dancers brandish real life daggers which, all too predictably, have slipped from their hands and charged at great speed into the pit, causing havoc among musos fearful for their lives and instruments.

In February in Sheffield one dagger flew across the pit and on to a valuable cello, causing not only serious damage to the instrument, as yet uncompensated, but also acute distress and delayed shock to the hapless cellist. In Wolverhampton at the end of May another dagger ended its errant, mercifully interrupted flight path in the sleeve of a viola player's arm causing him severe shock, pain and a week off work. A third incident in Blackpool at the beginning of the run was fortuitously less serious, merely distressing an unsuspecting oboe player.

The company's caring response to the dangers has been to erect a pathetically flimsy piece of plastic garden netting over the players.

Gable, for some reason known as "Little Finger", has responded to suggestions that the choreography might be toned down in the interests of safety has been magnanimous: aware of the queues of unemployed musos outside, he most generously offered to release any players anxious for their lives from their contracts.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

EYE TV

Cricket: First Test (BBC1/BBC2)

IN A BORROWING from the popular television show *A Question of Sport*, readers are now invited to identify "What Happened Next". All footage is taken from BBC cricket coverage.

In example A, the clip freezes as Geoffrey Boycott, the corporation's expert summariser, mutters: "Oh, no, no, no. 'E's just pooting it oop there to be 'it. 'E's nivver looked likely 't get 't wicket..."

In example B, the camera picks out a large pink teddy bear in the Headingley test-match crowd. Geoffrey Boycott, the BBC's expert summariser, says to Richie Benaud, the corporation's main cricket commentator: "What do you reckon 't teddy bear is saying, Richie?"

In example C, Richie Benaud remarks of a bowler: "There's not much point bowling there with a field split like that." Now, he invites a comment from Raymond Illingworth, co-summariser with Boycott.

In each case, what happened next? All right, time's up. Let's unfreeze the screen.

In case A, Geoffrey Boycott's remark about the Glamorgan bowler, Steve Watkin, an England debutante — was immediately followed by Watkin finding the edge of the bat and taking a vital West Indian wicket. Boycott hastily added: "That one was more like it."

In case B, Geoffrey Boycott's invitation to Richie Benaud to guess what the teddy bear was saying produced a long and icy silence. Eventually, Richie whispered: "Er, teddy bears have a language of their own"; but it was apparent that he wished he

'National Health Cuts 1979–1990'

hadn't and, moreover, that he wished he hadn't had to.

In case C, Richie Benaud's remark "There's not much point bowling there with a field split like that" produced from his colleague Ray Illingworth the "amplification": "With that field, Richie, he doesn't want to be bowling there."

The three case studies provide vivid illustrations of what is going wrong with BBC cricket coverage. Case A may seem unfair — all television sports commentators are prone to their words being contradicted by the action — but Boycott suffers from this problem more than most in the profession. He was the greatest English batsman of his generation, and greater than many in generations before and after but, at the mic, he has become an irritant and a bore.

Case B — the Pink Teddy Bear Incident — is an example of another problem which Boycott brings to the BBC commentary team. His training — in the chirpy, downmarket Sky satellite coverage — is constantly at odds with the quiet intelligence of Benaud, who probably has the best combination of voice-quality and knowledge of any television sports commentator.

Case C — Illingworth's instant repetition of what his senior colleague has said — is a typical occurrence. So lacking in original insights is Illingworth that his watches with Benaud come to resemble a parody of a Mozart opera in which the second voice produces a minimal paraphrase of what was contributed by the first. As with the tedious contributions of the other main commentator, Jack Bannister, this is a penalty of the insistence by BBC Television that all its commentators must have test match experience and, it appears, that they must be players of a fairly ancient vintage. The Radio 3 team — which includes younger voices like Mike Selvey, Jon Agnew and Vic Marks — speaks for the benefits of greater variety.

'Square Eyes'

GORGEOUS pouting *Sunset Times* editor Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill is about to be engulfed by a blizzard of writs following his deranged performance on Channel 4's *Hard News* last Sunday.

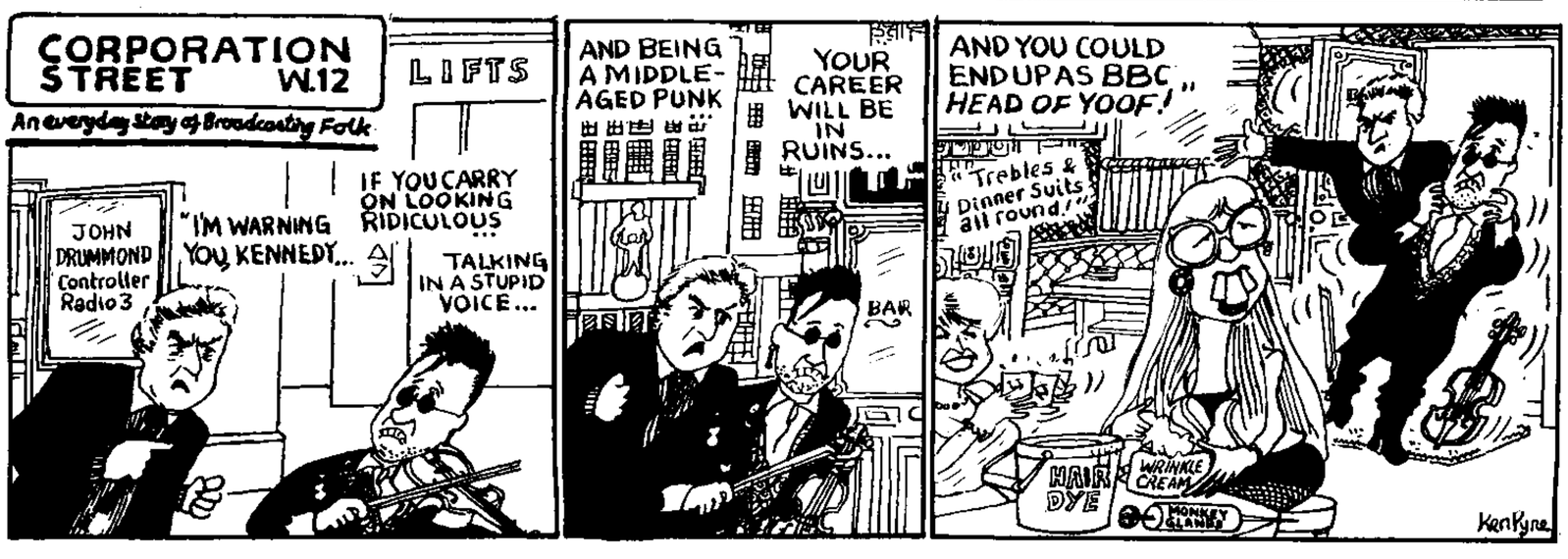
In the space of a five minute interview he managed to libel at least three people: Carmen Proetta (to whom his paper had to pay £150,000 only a few months ago, following its previous libel of her); former *ST* hack Barrie Penrose (whom he falsely alleged had left the paper "under a cloud"); and even the programme's producer, Eamon Hardy.

What caused Neill to flip his lid was *Hard News*'s exposé of the dodgy methods his newspaper had used to justify its dishonest coverage of the Gibraltar shootings. Most damagingly, it revealed that *ST* lawyer Alastair Brett had paid money to criminals in the hope that they would give evidence against Carmen Proetta in her libel case. Even Neill was forced to admit that this had been a "mistake".

The programme also showed how Brett and Neill had diverted the *Insight* team from its normal journalistic duties to look for dirt on Proetta which could be used in court; at one point Brett asked an *Insight* hack to don sub-aqua gear and dive down to the wrecks of two boats owned by Proetta's husband, in the hope that incriminating evidence might be on board. There are other instances, not cited in the programme: as when Brett told *Insight* editor Chris Blackhurst to go to the Royal Court theatre, pretending to be the paper's arts correspondent, and ask if Carmen Proetta had helped them with their play *Gibraltar Straits*; or when *Insight* hacks Nick Rufford and David Leppard were told to impersonate doctors in the hope of getting into the Marbella home of a friend of Carmen Proetta's who was ill at the time.

One person who ought to have breathed a sigh of relief after the programme was Robin "Moron" Morgan, the *ST* hack who masterminded the paper's infamous coverage of *Death on the Rock*; he was let off comparatively lightly. By an amazing coincidence, in recent weeks Morgan has been editing *City Limits* magazine, which is owned by Bernard Clark — the superannuated hippy who also runs *Hard News*.

But instead of being quietly grateful, Moron was furious; he rang Clark after the show to complain that he should have been given equal treatment with Andrew Neill. On Monday morning he cleared his desk at *City Limits* and stomped off in a huff.


CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
LIFTS
JOHN DRUMMOND Controller Radio 3
"I'M WARNING YOU, KENNEDY...
IF YOU CARRY ON LOOKING RIDICULOUS...
TALKING IN A STUPID VOICE...
AND BEING A MIDDLE-AGED PUNK
YOUR CAREER WILL BE IN RUINS...
BAR
AND YOU COULD END UP AS BBC HEAD OF YOOF!"
"Trebles & Dinner Suits all round!"
HAIR DYE
WRINKLE CREAM
MONKEY GLANDS
Ken Pyne

MEDIA NEWS

THE problem about making jokes is that they can come true: it now looks as if John Birt might actually become director- general of the BBC.

All those still laughing at his attempts to suck up to anyone important (regular dinners, football matches, boxes at the races, you-name-it-the-BBC-is-paying-for-it) should stop laughing at once.

A meeting in the next month will decide whether the current DG, Michael Checkland, should continue. Most agree that he has done a dull but competent job. Not so BBC governors Joel Barnett and Marmaduke Hussey, who have been so charmed by Birt that they are now keen for the man who rose without trace to take over. Not a funny thought any more.

MEMBERS of the public have been encouraged by the Independent Television Commission's decision to comment on the merits of the various applicants for TV franchises.

One viewer who decided to pitch in was Barry Fox, a freelance technical hack who writes for specialist journals. He wished to draw the ITC's attention to the track record of John Gau, chief executive of Richard Branson's company CPV which is bidding for licences currently held by Anglia, TVS and Thames.

Gau was previously the £150,000 a year director of programmes and deputy chief executive at doomed satellite company BSB. In 1989 he provoked outrage among independent producers when he awarded a £1 million contract for arts and entertainment programmes to John Gau Productions, a company which was owned by Gau himself and run by his wife. No other tenders for the contract were invited.

Barry Fox wondered why Gau should now feel qualified for fresh rewards after his role in last year's collapse of BSB, which left thousands of viewers stuck with obsolete equipment; but before writing to the ITC he sent CPV a fax asking if it had anything to say about Gau's background.

It did indeed; he was immediately sent a letter by Gau's solicitors, Nabarro Nathanson, demanding "a total withdrawal of your scurrilous allegations" and an undertaking not to repeat them "in the context of the CPV-TV franchise application".

This missive was followed by several more threats from the lawyers, including a warning of libel writs if Fox offered the ITC an opinion about Gau that was "in any way defamatory". Since the public's comments to the ITC about franchise applicants are strictly confidential, it is hard to know how Nabarro Nathanson will find out. But no doubt they have their methods.

Fox confirmed to the *Eye* last week that he was being threatened by Gau's lawyers. It reminded him, he said, of his previous legal skirmish with a jumpy BSB executive. In July 1989 he wrote a letter to Sir Trevor Holdsworth, chairman of BSB, arguing that BSB would end up taking channels on the second Astra satellite. By return of post Fox had a fierce letter from BSB's solicitors, Freshfields, demanding an undertaking "that you will not publish or be in any way involved in the publication of any article suggesting that BSB will take channels on the second Astra satellite or will in any way act in breach of its IBA contract". Failing that, they would seek an injunction against him.

The following year, of course, BSB merged with Sky, thereby committing itself to broadcast from the Astra satellite, and in the process broke its IBA contract. Neither Holdsworth nor Freshfields apologised.

Sir Trevor is now comfortably ensconced as chairman of National Power. But it seems his disastrous record at BSB hasn't put him off the television business; he is part of a consortium called Viking TV which has applied for the Yorkshire franchise.

● *Those Franchise Rumours in Brief*: LWT outbid by London Broadcasting. Thames by Carlton. Granada by Phil Redmond. *But* TVS outbid Frost/Branson. Only the quality thresholds to go...

HACK WATCH: No 2: Peter McKay

PETER MCKAY is known to TV viewers as the gurgling Scotsman who sometimes presents *What The Papers Say*. But his written words are usually available only to those fortunate few who live within the catchment area of the London *Evening Standard*.

The subjects on which he offers his philosophical ruminations in the *Standard* are many and various. Politics, art, literature, car-parking — this formidable polymath has an informed opinion on them all. As a tribute to British journalism's very own Renaissance Man — and to give provincial readers a taste of what they are missing — here are highlights from McHackey's recent columns:

16 May

Reporting from Washington DC, McKay praises the pop singer Madonna: "Long may she reign in her pointed bras. Why, I might even splash out on one of her platters tomorrow."

Further down the page he notes that one of the airports in Washington is called National. "National airport sounds important and permanent," he acutely observes. "It's the only airport in America of that name."

20 May

Passing through Florida, McKay notices that a lot of retired people live there. The Queen is visiting Florida at the same time, which prompts the columnist to think about the royal family. "They are human beings," he reveals, "with all the potential for sadness, ennui, failure and mortality that afflicts the rest of us."

On Cable TV McKay catches up with *Dances With Wolves*, which he loftily condemns as "simplistic rubbish".

30 May

Back in Britain, our hero attacks the "disgraceful law" requiring television viewers to buy licences, which has been in operation for decades but — it seems — has only just come to McKay's attention. He thinks TV detector vans are part of the "police state".

6 June

Further outrage: McKay has heard that some TV licence demands now include adverts for *Radio Times*. "Surely a government communication to an individual should not contain a commercial plug," he rages.

He watches *Silence Of The Lambs*. "Well, I've seen more frightening films," he boasts. "Try *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* sometime."

"I am no movie expert," he adds modestly.

10 June

A new scandal is uncovered: "I wonder," McKay writes, "if you share my irritation at the mere existence of National Car Parks." Why can't people park where they like, when they like? The question should be "raised in Parliament".

But it isn't all gloom. McKay has read in the *Mail on Sunday* that there is a servant at 10 Downing Street who irons the Prime Minister's shirts. "Isn't that charming?"

Meanwhile, from yet another newspaper he learns that Monsignor Alfred Gilbey, the "legendary clubman", will be 90 next month. "Have you ever wondered what a 'legendary clubman' is?" McKay asks. "Is it someone who — like Monsignor Gilbey — actually lives in a club? Or, is it someone who has made the club the focal point of their lives?" Alas, this important question remains unanswered.

13 June

Under the huge headline "Ban These Topless Men", McKay fearlessly tackles another modern vice. "Isn't it time we followed Southampton, Long Island, which has just passed a by-law banning men from taking their shirts off in public?" he demands. "It is not just topless that I object to. Joggers in the streets seem vulgar too because they are parading their dreams of health and fitness, something which is marginally acceptable in the sweaty confines of 'health' clubs but an outrage on the pavements. But topless navvies with their cans of beer are an abomination."

McKay also joins the great Nigel Kennedy debate. "In music, as in most serious things, it is always a question of balance," he concludes judiciously.

Ad nauseam

Sir,

Current darling of the advertising world, Tim Delaney, recently nominated the new Hamlet ad — where mouse-like gentleman in Reliant Robin knocks over a line of Hells Angels' motorbikes — as campaign of the week in the trade rag, CAMPAIGN.

No doubt he is also a fan of the film, PEE WEE'S BIG ADVENTURE, *where the zany Mr Herman performs an identical stunt.*

Yours faithfully,
GODRIC SMITH,

London N1.

Sir,

As you are unlikely to receive STV or Grampian TV south of Watford, you may not have seen the Scottish Electricity Board's privatisation advert which features a post-match style "interview", post-Bannockburn, with King Robert the Bruce.

The format appears to be a straight lift from the post-Hastings interview with William the Conqueror, post-match style, performed by Terry Jones and Michael Palin in the LWT comedy series THE COMPLETE AND UTTER HISTORY OF BRITAIN, *broadcast in early 1969. The script of the original sketch can be found in Roger Wilmut's book* FROM FRINGE TO FLYING CIRCUS. *I claim my £10 (or four Hydro Board shares).*

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW McCRACKEN,

Grantown-on-Spey, Morayshire.

Sir,

Have any of your readers noticed the extraordinary resemblance between a former advert for Pepsi-Cola and a scene from the film DINER *starring Mickey Rourke?*

The scene depicted in the film, which just happens to be the basis of the advert, is that of a 1950s American diner. An obese man, meeting a challenge, is munching his way through every food and drink item on the menu to the delight and marvel of the surrounding teenagers who have placed bets.

When it is revealed that the cola presented for his consumption is not Pepsi-Cola, cries of "the bet's off" are exclaimed.

This advert is a complete and utter rip-off of the scene in the film. Could they, by any chance be related?

Yours faithfully,
GAVIN BUCHANAN,

Kirkstall, Leeds.

● ***£10 Paid for similar contributions***

On the recently repeated *Great Journeys* (BBC2), Andy Kershaw, a disc jockey, and Billy Bragg, a pop singer, were chosen to illuminate the historical, geographic and cultural complexities of the ancient silver route from Potosí in Bolivia to Arica on the Chilean coast.

Bragg himself airily defended this choice at the start of the programme, dismissing the days when the BBC used to "send professors up the Limpopo" and explaining that he and Kershaw would provide "a different prospective" on Bolivia.

Bolivia is a poor country and Bragg a singer with a celebrated Red Wedge-style social conscience. Kershaw and Bragg were taken on a tour of the Cerro Rico mine in Potosí, where children as young as 12 labour for a pittance in air thick with arsenic and sulphurous gases. Working practices have barely improved since the 17th century and hallucinogenic coca leaves are needed to get through a day's work. The miner's life expectancy rarely exceeds 30 years.

Sadly it soon became clear that Bragg had come to Bolivia not to learn from these suffering workers, but to educate them. The tired miners were lined up (like so many Bolivians on the duo's route) and forced to listen to an interminable pro-NUM sermon set to music, performed in a tuneless and nasal Romford accent that was hard enough for British viewers to follow, let alone non-English speaking Bolivians.

Union miners stand together,
Do not heed the coal board's tales...
Miners' strength cannot be broken
when in union we combine", etc, etc.

This was all very well, except that the mine in question was a workers' co-operative which the Bolivian government has tried to close down because of its appalling conditions. The government has even opened a safer, more modern mine further down the hill, but the workers are so strongly organised that they have defeated all attempts to shut it down.

O.B.N.

After nearly 22 years of trying and rarely getting close, England finally beat West Indies in a home Test match yesterday, with a convincing 115-run victory over Viv Richardson's team at Headingley.

The win prompted Tory MP Gerald Howarth to call for the Commons to express its thanks not only to the team, but also to John Major and the Sports Minister, Robert Atkins, for "the inspiration of our ministers".

Guardian

Submitted by Mike Walton

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

STAFFORDSHIRE

AS THE belated national hysteria over Staffordshire social services department's war against children in its care dies down, serious doubts are emerging over the rigour of the Levy report into the pin-down scandal.

Few *Eye* readers need reminding how the Labour-run county council carried out bizarre Pol Pot-style experiments in social engineering with children in its charge. The experiments, euphemistically dubbed "pin-down", were rumbled by the *Eye* and the authority's two Liberal councillors, Alan Thomas and Christina Jebb, a full 12 months ago. Reluctantly, the council agreed last summer to allow its activities to be investigated by outside powers, which resulted in the lengthy inquiry and report under the auspices of Cleveland abuse inquiry barrister Allan Levy.

However, despite the wrath of the civilised world on discovering the brutality behind pin-down, there have been few admissions of guilt from the powers that be in Staffs — the council still doesn't fully appreciate public concern over its methods. Unfortunately, nor does Levy's report fully convey the depressing sense of isolation within Staffs social services nor how the department has stubbornly resisted all attempts to bring it in line with 20th century views on compassion and tolerance.

The level of ignorance which contributed to pin-down's deployment is frightening. The system was used by social workers for six years without councillors realising it was illegal to incarcerate young waifs against their will. Worse still, all children in care, regardless of how they came to be there, were dumped together by staff for pin-down treatment — hard-core delinquents, plain truants, children at odds with step-parents or innocent victims of child abuse.

Even more remarkably, parents seemed to be completely unaware that they had the right to bring their offspring home from voluntary care. During the time pin-down ran only one parent exercised his legal right to take his child home when he discovered what was happening.

An omission from the Levy report is the story of the 12-year-old girl who was imprisoned against her will at the Birches home for six weeks in the winter of 1987 (*Eye* 742). Readers will recall how the poor wretch escaped once and managed to cover about a mile in the snow wearing only her nightie (she was not allowed underwear) before being recaptured. Her "crime" which led to her being pinned-down? She had confided to a social worker that she had been sexually abused at home, a claim which had been denied and cost her a spell in solitary confinement.

Once her pin-down punishment was over she was sent home and allegedly re-abused for a further seven months until rescued by the NSPCC. All this took place in the winter of 1987. Yet, according to the Levy report, pin-down did not begin at the Birches until February 1988. Perhaps the Birches' log-book for 1987 is one of the several that went missing at the time the Levy inquiry was announced?

HARROGATE

THE long-suffering poll taxpayers of Harrogate, saddled with a £34 million debt for building the notorious Conference Centre (see *Eyes passim*), will be intrigued to learn the identity of one of the firms bidding to buy the centre as part of the council's exhibition business "sale of the century".

Frontrunner in the two-horse race to take on the centre — but not the debt! — *is an* Anglo-American consortium involving the US-based Spectator Management Group International and John Laing Construction Ltd.

Laing, of course, is no stranger to the controversial centre, having been the contractor during the troubled and much-delayed building project. The independent Selman Report into the saga had the following to say about Laing's performance: "Laing's must accept part of the responsibility for the fact that additional time was required... The quality of the contractor's management was criticised by the architects and engineers on many occasions... the performance of the contractor's management was, at times, not as good as it should have been."

Ironic, then, that the much-criticised Laing should now be in the running to take over Harrogate's conference and exhibition business at a knock down rate. And the council's reasons for selling? Because it can't afford to update the exhibition facilities due to the huge debt repayments still outstanding on the Conference Centre built by Laing's!

BIRMINGHAM

A DISCREET bamboo curtain is being swiftly drawn over the city's latest ridiculous and costly foreign venture.

Six years ago Labour-run Birmingham (which, don't forget, has just bought a French chateau in Burgundy for £150,000) opened an office in Hong Kong, ostensibly to try to persuade investors leaving the doomed colony to bring their cash to the city.

There then followed a series of foreign jaunts by councillors of all parties that would have shamed Marco Polo. The reality was a series of drunken local politicians using the chance of a few days away from home to enjoy all Hong Kong's nightlife had to offer at their citizens' expense.

But now the day of reckoning has dawned: the office was costing up to £100,000 a year and bringing practically nothing in return. Brum's "ambassador" and director of the trading post, Dr Sze-chen Chang, 68, has been pensioned off and the office closed.

However, the potential need for foreign trips out east has not been entirely eliminated: a local PR firm is being handed £10,000 a year to "maintain a presence" in HK, while the ever-expansionist — and ever-hopeful — bureaucrats are using the savings to open another office. In Japan!

TERMINAL paranoia is gripping Birmingham's social services department where the entire 80-strong staff of a children's home have been summoned before managers to face accusations of leaking the department's many scandals to the press.

Assistant director Richard Drinkall has written to all the staff at the infamous St John's home in Erdington summoning them to interviews with departmental hatchet-man Tony Flynn. This follows a series of *Eye* revelations, the latest being the discovery of two social workers locked together late at night in a cell at Pentlands, the "top security" unit from which children have made a series of escapes — one hidden in a tea trolley. Last week social workers at the same unit were carpeted after they allowed a teenage boy sex abuser access to a retarded 13-year-old girl abuse victim whom he promptly sexually assaulted.

Meanwhile at the Ipstones Avenue home an officer resigned after a series of abuse allegations. The home's chief officer, Youz Boran, has been reprimanded for using his funds to install a satellite dish, mainly used by staff, when the home needs an estimated £8,000 to be spent on furniture and repairs.

However, just to show that Birmingham social services department still has its priorities in tact, at the Berners Street hostel a social worker has been let off with just a warning after kicking a mentally handicapped adult — and then sacked because he took some time off work.

YET MORE evidence has come to light of the role of Britain's nuclear industry in trying to cover up the health implications of Chernobyl (see *Eyes passim*).

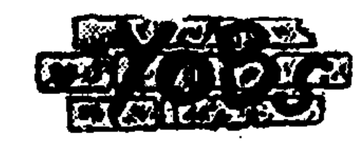
It appears that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) called upon the skills of British Nuclear Forum (BNF) to help write a substantial part of its recent, ludicrous medical report. Officially a trade organisation representing the likes of the Atomic Energy Association, GEC, National Power, Rolls Royce, Balfour Beatty — anyone, in other words, with a vested interest in nuclear power — BNF is, in fact, the industry's slickest public relations operation. Hardly the most suitable candidate, one would have thought, to write an objective scientific study.

Dr John Gittus, who recently helped to discredit a Soviet scientist critical of the official version of events concerning Chernobyl (*Eye* 768), flew to Vienna on several occasions to coordinate BNF's contribution to the report. As BNF's director-general, he appointed Maryanna Schaefer, in charge of BNF's special projects, to write about "protective measures". ("Eating rice instead of potatoes is a good example of a protective measure," says Schaefer, without a hint of irony.)

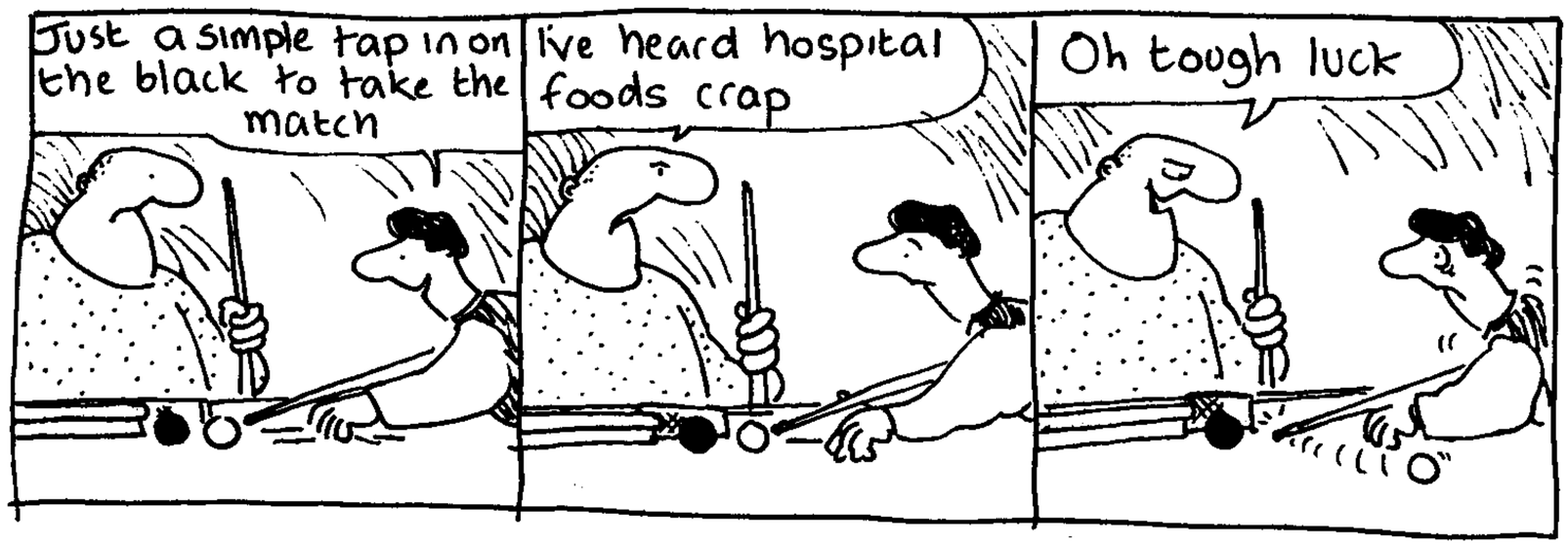
Formerly of the CEGB and with a degree in physics, Schaefer did not seem remotely surprised by the report's laughable conclusions. The IAEA's most urgent recommendation — page 35, headed General Public Health Assistance in the Affected Republics — suggests that action should be taken on dental hygiene. In other words, all dental floss donations kindly welcomed, particularly by those Byelorussians suffering from leukaemia.

Most of the 200 writers and "scientists" used by the IAEA to compile the report were engaged as "cost-free experts", a standard euphemism meaning that they were funded fully or partly by their own companies or organisations. ("That's just the way IAEA operates," says Schaefer.)

So far, the IAEA has steadfastly refused to publish the vested interests of those involved in the study. It has also declined all requests to publish the 800-page report in its entirety. Instead, it has circulated a flimsy summary which draws a number of firm conclusions from what the IAEA actually admits are "not always adequate data".

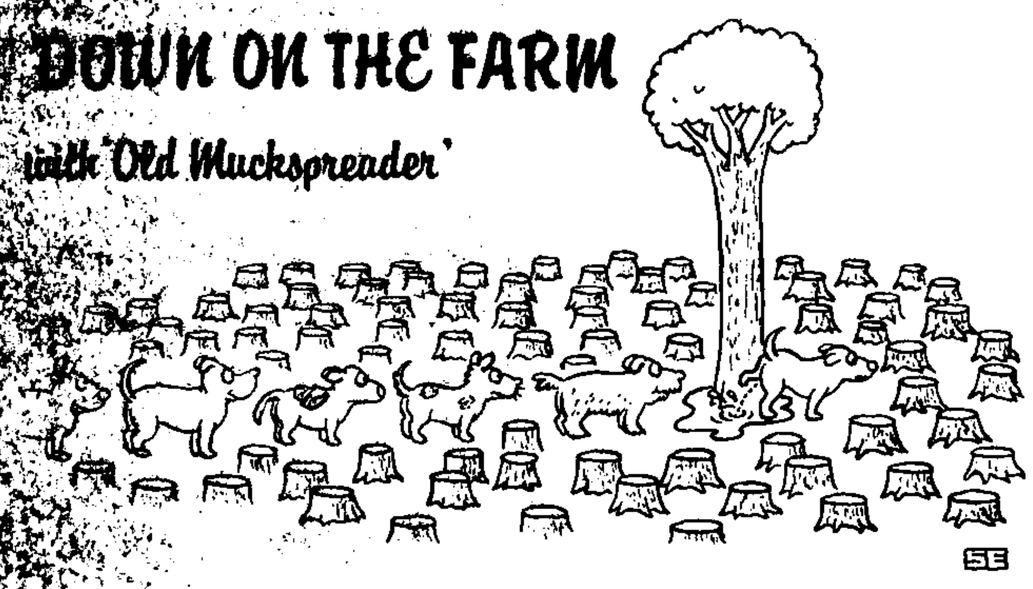


HUSBAND



DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'



SUBSIDY minister John Gummer says the proposition that farmers should be paid simply to be farmers is "plainly nonsense". And then that he should be supporting the EC's one-year set-aside scheme whose objective is clearly to pay barley farmers simply to be barley barons.

Under this brilliant new initiative arable farmers will be handed around £160 in taxpayers' loot for every acre they don't bother to plant cereals on. Of course, if it wasn't for a subsidy on the price of cereals, the red-faced yokels wouldn't want to plant them anyway. So the bureaucrats are having to bribe them with further hand-outs to make them stop.

Even now Honest John has his minions beavering away on a plan to make set-aside farmers plant cow-pats on the idle acres. That way he can represent the whole ludicrous affair as one of protecting the environment.

If he really wanted to look after the countryside, why not axe farm subsidies altogether? That way farmers would stop producing crops nobody wants and ruining the environment in the process. Despite scare stories about rural dereliction put out by the NFU press office, the countryside has seldom looked better than during the thirties when subsidies were virtually nil.

Strange that a minister eager to see industries stand on their own feet should be so keen on helping agriculture.

ONE OF THE major beneficiaries of farm subsidies — pesticide multinational Hoechst — has announced a 20 per cent rise in profits.

Gleeful chairman Dr Wolfgang Hilger says the increase is largely due to a new generation of weedkillers like Cheetah. This is the product that has brought a rare smile to the faces of agri-hacks in recent months. Times have got so hard for the farming trade mags that it's only the free-rolling agrochem companies who are keeping many of them afloat; and few pesticides have been as heavily advertised as Cheetah.

Hoechst can thank the bureaucrats for the lucrative new market. The top-selling chemical (real name fenoxaprop-ethyl) is used chiefly to control the grass weed blackgrass. And that's only there because of EC subsidies for intensive cereal growing. Take away the subsidies and farmers would return to sensible rotations and blackgrass would quickly die out — without the help of Dr Hilger's nice little earner.

Now the company is spending some of its extra profits on the high-tech science of genetic engineering. The aim is to create a new strain of maize. You might think they'd want to develop a crop that was faster growing or more resistant to disease; but no: the boffins at Hoechst have only one objective — to produce a strain tolerant to another of the company's weedkillers called Challenge. That way farmers can be induced to spend even more of their subsidies on splashing the stuff around.

WORD HAS reached the steading that the milk sheiks of Thames Ditton are sharpening up their writs in another bid to prop up their tottering empire. The latest ploy is to scare dairy farmers into shoring up the creaky monopoly by threatening to cut them off without a penny if they don't tow the party line.

Under the monopoly farmers are not only forced to sell their milk to the MMB, they're also obliged to hand over some of their returns to finance the board's growing manufacturing empire. Now the board is trying to whip rebels into line with the warning that they'll kiss goodbye to that past investment if they break the monopoly.

Acting on a compliant from one worried group of farmers, subsidy minister Gummer set up an inquiry. A distinguished committee, chaired by former Treasury solicitor Sir Michael Kerry QC, subsequently recommended that in the interests of fairness the dividends of Dairy Crest should go to all dairy farmers, not just those remaining loyal to the MMB.

The minister accepted the recommendation. However, the board is refusing to accept it and appears intent on dragging the issue through the courts. The milk bosses are clearly more interested in preserving their own oligarchy than seeing fair play.

Sporting Life

THE ENTERTAINING possibility of a Neville Callaghan-trained Derby winner called Corrupt was sadly torpedoed by Cash Asmussen's usual Epsom performance of trying to ride from at least two furlongs off the pace.

Not that it made a lot of difference to the result as the best horse won, leaving trainer Paul Cole to lament that it wasn't ridden by his stable jockey Richard Quinn as opposed to the remarkably unpopular upstart Alan Munro.

Other than the actual race, Derby Day '91 was a distinctly cold, wet and underwhelming experience. But then all the best drama at Epsom happens behind the scenes: not least the bizarre scenario involving trainer Reg Akehurst, his wife Sheila and son John.

Reg, who trained the winner of the fifth race on Derby Day, puzzled many in racing when he announced his decision this spring to quit the employ of the mysterious moustached Peter Bolton and to leave Bolton's lavish Whitcombe Manor training complex in Dorset less than a year after going there.

The official explanation was that financial pressures had forced Reg's hand as he'd been unable to sell his old house and yard in Epsom. Epsom sources, however, suggest that this was just a statement to save face and that in fact Reg's abrupt exit was more to do with his being given notice by Bolton after the millionaire property developer had belatedly discovered certain aspects of Reg's personality which were deemed incompatible with the high-flying Whitcombe image.

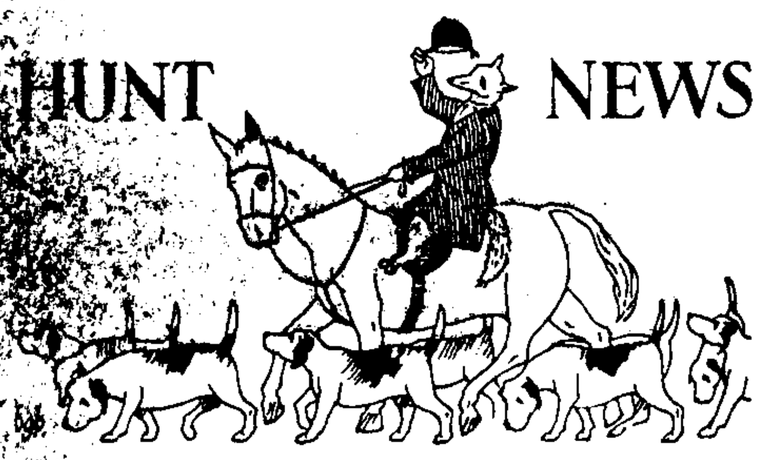
Reg put his Epsom establishment up for sale as soon as he moved to Dorset last year but was unable to find a buyer. So Reg reluctantly let his son, John, who had not begun training at the time, take out a lease on the premises. Jockey Club rules stipulate that a trainer not owning his own yard may not have a licence unless he has a lease on a stable of at least three years. This is meant to give owners some kind of protection. John Akehurst's lease was supposedly signed last June, a trainer's licence duly followed and John started up, successfully, in his own right. But when his father returned to Epsom without a base of his own, he bluntly informed his son that he had six weeks to get out.

John Akehurst and his wife Sarah were extremely popular in Epsom; but the same cannot be said of Reg or Reg's wife Sheila. Encouraged by friends to stand up to the older pair, John endeavoured to remind them that he had been given a three-year tenancy. At which point it seems the argument took an unpleasantly physical turn with the result that John had to receive hospital treatment for a leg injury. He subsequently agreed to quit the South Hatch yard simply to spare himself further aggravation.

Last summer, before Reg's move moved to Dorset, police were called to his house after guests at a wedding party at the adjoining South Hatch Racing Club (where Reg had made an uninvited appearance earlier in the afternoon) saw and heard the trainer crashing round his garden, seemingly the worse for wear and yelling abuse at Mrs Heather Pitt, the club's popular manageress. Reg and Mrs Pitt had been in dispute over a boundary and only the intervention of son John, who pleaded with the Old Bill to treat it as a family quarrel, saved Reg from being carted off to the nick.

'Major Bonkers'

HUNT NEWS



THE *Eye* has reported extensively how various hunts have threatened libel proceedings against local newspapers and those who write to the local press on the subject of fox-hunting.

In one such case Mrs Daphne Birkby, of Alton, Hampshire, wrote to *The Herald* on the Isle of Wight correcting a letter from a hunt supporter and referring to the cruelty of the hunting fraternity. Almost immediately, Mrs Birkby received a letter from stag-hunting solicitor Matthew Knight, of the firm Cripps Harries Hall, threatening a lawsuit on behalf of the joint masters of the Isle of Wight Hunt and its professional huntsman, Stephen Clifton.

Both Mrs Birkby and the newspaper resisted this entirely bogus claim and it was subsequently dropped.

Since then, on 7 June this year, the same Stephen Clifton, 35, and James Butcher, 25, the latter a terrierman with the Essex and Suffolk Hunt, were found guilty of attempting to kill, injure, or take a badger and of digging for a badger.

Each man was fined £250 and ordered to pay £500 each towards the costs of the prosecution, believed to be in excess of £7,000, which had been brought by the RSPCA. The magistrate who passed the sentences explained that his apparent leniency (the maximum fine allowed by law is £2,000) was due to the fact that both men were certain to lose their jobs and tied accomodation as a result of the case.

The prosecution evidence depended largely on the testimony of Paul Martin, an undercover RSPCA investigator. Describing one of the badger-baiting incidents, Martin recalls: "The baiters' barbarity knew no bounds. Nobody could claim what they were doing was sport. They sometimes smashed the badgers nearly to death before putting dogs on them and I had to grin and bear it."

The only really comical part of the case was the evidence brought by the defence. Clifton and Butcher claimed that the incident in which they were arrested was an entirely innocent one. They said they were in the area with the permission of the landowner and had thought the sett was deserted — although they also said they were after a fox that had been pestering lambs. Their story was supported by Miss Cheryl Smith (who has ridden second horse for the Isle of Wight Hunt). She told the court she had heard no mention of a badger by the men, but had gone along for the walk.

"These light meters are a godsend."

Sally Deedes

DURING the storms earlier this year, a Mr Hoffman of Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex, lost the solar panels from his roof.

He wrote to his insurance broker and received a claim form which he filled in and returned. A week or two later a loss adjustor called and Mr Hoffman was assured that he had adequate cover, but was told that a heating expert would also have to give an opinion. A month later, without being told why, his claim for £1,400 was rejected. He consequently paid the bill himself but did not give up the battle.

Many letters and phone calls later he learned the name of his insurer — Lombank — and took over the claim himself. His file was in London and hence there was a further delay while it was sent down to Sussex. Four months later, Lombank telephoned to say that the claim had magically been accepted. No cheque was enclosed, however, since Lombank had to write to the loss adjustor to tell him of its change of mind. He in turn then had to send Mr Hoffman a form which had to be returned to the adjustor and then sent on to Lombank. Lombank would then send the loss adjustor, not Mr Hoffman, the cheque which would then be forwarded to Mr Hoffman.

While German law requires all claims which are settled to contain an interest component for any period longer than 14 days and claimants can charge for telephone calls and any correspondence during the dispute, the position in Britain is geared to the interests of the slow-moving insurance giants.

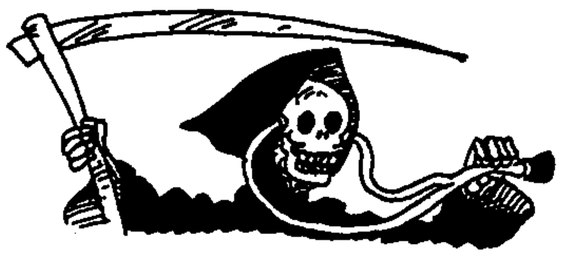
I rang the office of the insurance ombudsman to ask whether it could tell me how many initially rejected claims were finally paid each year. A spokesman said that in 89/90 15,000 inquiries had been received. The complainant is first told to represent his or her case to the director of whichever insurance company is involved, and that if they still have no joy the ombudsman will investigate. Of these initial 15,000 complaints, some 5,683 have not come back following this course of action and another 5,073 are still "in work" (each case can take up to four months to process). The rest have been dealt with, presumably to the satisfaction of the client, with only a significant 182 being withdrawn on the advice of the ombudsman.

And was there any move afoot for British insurers to adopt the same consumer-friendly approach of the Germans? No.

SHELL'S claim to be "cleaner and greener" and to care about the environment is being undermined by its latest sales promotion.

Until 31 May it offered five air miles to any driver buying 40 litres of fuel. Smaller cars with smaller capacity engines — the ones that generally do least damage to the environment —rarely have 40 litre petrol tanks, a capacity only found in the large fatcat cars that use more petrol than is decent.

Shell has no doubt been awakened to this fact since on 10 June a new Shell Air Miles Club was launched with a purchase requirement of only 25 litres. Although this gives more encouragement to the smaller "greener" vehicles, the gas guzzlers still have the edge.



HEALTH NEWS

MEDIA shrink Dr Anthony Clare himself faces a challenging session in front of an Irish government inspector following a controversial admission into the Dublin mental hospital he manages.

The smooth psychiatrist has combined his career in journalism (including a newly launched agony column in the *European*, an incurable case if ever there was one) with his original calling, and his controversial appointment as a professor at Trinity College in Dublin led to Clare assuming control of St Patrick's, a hospital affiliated to the college.

Following questions in the Irish Dail, the republic's inspector of mental hospitals has been told to find out how a 39-year-old woman came to be an unwilling guest in one of Clare's wards. The woman, a mother of three, had separated from her husband, obtained an interim injunction against him and applied for a permanent barring order. The court case to decide whether to grant the order was set for this month.

However, the process was disrupted when a Garda car, an ambulance and two doctors turned up unannounced at the woman's house. Her estranged husband had, without her knowledge, initiated her committal to hospital on the grounds of insanity. In the Republic of Ireland, relatives are able to perform this deed on members of their family because the republic has failed to update its mental health legislation. The woman spent two nights in the hospital before being freed.

Clare has welcomed the planned investigation claiming that safeguards relating to the certification procedure, in particular the need for two independent doctors to carry out an examination of prospective patients, operated in this case. The detained woman claims she wasn't examined, and prospects for the legal profession look good should this prove to be the case.

FIRE NEWS

THE British Research Establishment is not expected to make a great fuss over its report into the fire at Knowsley Heights, a showpiece council tower block in Merseyside, on 5 April.

The fire was put out in 90 minutes and by a series of strokes of good fortune no one died and only three people needed hospital treatment. A fire brigade officer, however, described the scene as "the most frightening thing any of us has ever seen".

The block was specially refurbished and overclad last year at a cost of £1m in an attempt to save energy consumption, but nothing was done about the cause of the fire: a cause which is strikingly familiar to that of the fire in Wolverhampton last year (and reported at least three times in the *Eye*).

A "chimney effect" was created in the gap between the overcladding and the outer walls of the block, with none of the "chimneys" broken up with fire breaks as they should have been.

The new cladding experiment was acclaimed by the Department of the Environment and the British Research Establishment. Whether these dangerous "chimneys" (either in the core of the blocks, as at Wolverhampton, or in the outside walls as at Knowsley) will be criticised in the latter's report remains to be seen. But most firemen who study these things believe it is only a matter of time before there is a major national fire disaster in Britain's prematurely ageing tower blocks.

MANX NEWS

ONE HOPES that association with Peter Clowes of Barlow-Clowes fame is no bar to doing business on the Isle of Man.

Manx officials are claiming proudly that they "kept out" Barlow Clowes, despite approaches from "certain individuals".

This highminded approach might explain all the interest in OCRA, the Overseas Company Registrations Agents, a firm which fixes customers up with exotic companies in tax havens that make life difficult for anyone investigating the customer.

OCRA is owned by two Manx companies which in turn are owned by two British Virgin Island companies. Since the BVI is one of those havens that make life difficult for investigators, the final ownership of OCRA, with its jolly Manx office, is quite hard to trace.

The indicatbrs, however, suggest that the Isle of Man's Peter Henwood might know some of the answers. Henwood was a frequent companion of Peter Clowes on trips to Gibraltar, Geneva, Luxembourg, Manchester and even to the Isle of Man.

Is this going to be held against him?

Letters

Litter lout

Sir,

"One bomb exploded in one litter bin in one London railway station..." and one dead person — you insensitive bastards.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL JACKSON,

Watford, Herts.

Roy Stockdill

Sir,

Thank you for agreeing to print a letter correcting the mistake in your last issue.

My paper bought the "Stephanie" serialisation rights on my boss's instructions — not mine — and from Ebury Press, which had already bought the rights from the literary agent.

Your innuendo had no basis beyond where Cloud Cuckoos migrate.

Yours sincerely,
ROY STOCKDILL,
News of the World.

London E1

A great deal

Sir,

The allegations in your 7 June issue, Street of Shame column, concerning myself and the "literary" editor of the NEWS OF THE WORLD, *are untrue.*

The book, STEPHANIE: A GIRL IN A MILLION, *is eminently suitable for publication in a tabloid newspaper such as the* NEWS OF THE WORLD.

I was not the grantor of the serialisation rights. The sale was, in fact, made by Ebury Press.

I have been caused a great deal of distress and embarrassment by your comments.

Yours faithfully,
COLLEEN DOYLE,

Epsom, Surrey.

Apron strings

Sir,

Police 5: 7 June

There is, I must point out, no need to "buy all the force new masonic aprons".

I don't need one, never have, and, hopefully never will. Incredibly there are thousands like me, in this force and in others, who have no masonic links of any kind and do not wish to cultivate any.

The police take enough stick, a lot of it justified, without you tarring us all with the same brush.

If I had a subscription to cancel, I would do so at once.

Yours, in deep shit,
D. RILEY,
PC "G" 2151
GMP.

Ashton-Under-Lyne

Hard one

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers could advise me whether Karl Otto Pohl, retiring president of the Bundesbank, was being rude in referring to John Major's hard ECU as "likely to create a grey area in European monetary policy"?

Yours faithfully,
JULIEN GARRAN,
retiring Economics student,

Cambridge University.

Beadle dumb

Sir,

You may be wrong in claiming that the Jeremy Beadle who writes for CLASSIC CD *is not the same person as the idiot who appears on television. In a recent review of Tchaikovsky's violin concerto, he said, "Mozart was persuaded by his students at the Moscow Conservatoire to alter the slow movement". You are right about* CLASSIC CD *as a whole being Game-For-A-Laugh — in the same issue they refer to the "Six Symphonies of Henze". You will no doubt recall the performance of Henze's Seventh Symphony at the 1984 Proms.*

Yours faithfully,
DAVID CUMMINGS,
The New Everyman Dictionary of Music,

Harrow, Middx.

In training

Sir,

I have just spent a month travelling Western Europe by train. I happened to take with me a certain publication containing a cartoon in which a British Railperson bears on his chest something to the effect of yes-I-know-all-the-other-railways-run-better-trains-than-we-do.

I was able to savour this while enjoying three strikes; various locomotive failures; consistently imprecise timekeeping, especially in Germany; a major international connection let go by 17 minutes on a line with four trains a day; various seat reservation foul-ups; one forced detraining at 01.00; a major cross-channel route unable to confirm reservations and forcing me to take a chance at 01.00; a major Eurocity service with failed air-conditioning and crews who angrily refused passengers' demands for a window to be opened; contradictory versions of service cancellations on a "jour fête"; timetable alterations without warning on an everyday long-distance service; major failures with the opening of one new high-speed route; outrageous supplements on another; hardly a single announcement/explanation/apology when delays occurred; not one single train lavatory anywhere in Spain with soap... I shall be living off the stories for months.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL OAKLEY,

Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.

Wreathed in smiles

Sir,

Ken Pyne's entertaining cartoon in EYE *769 about the Madras flower shop losing the Gandhi account will no doubt cause a number of complaints from outraged readers — some, perhaps, cancelling lifelong subscriptions. Please print these letters: this sort of thing can be every bit as funny as a cartoon.*

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN MEYER,

Leeds.

Flower power

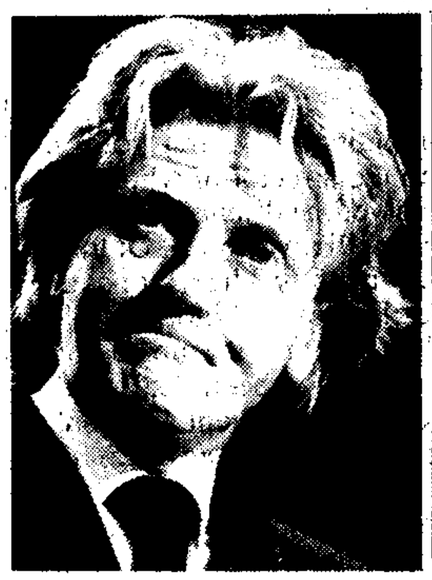
Sir,

I used to think that people who wrote to you complaining about tasteless cartoons were stupid bastards — until I saw your Gandhiflowers cartoon.

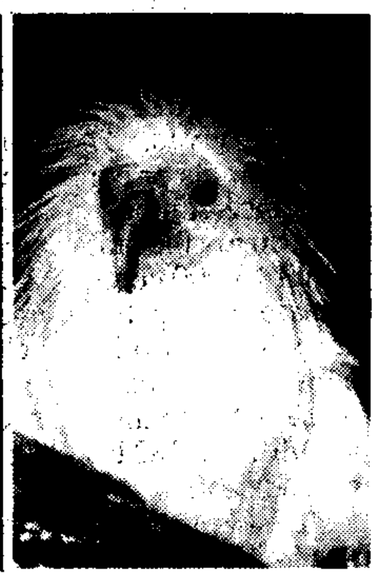
Yours, subscription pending,
ROY PENNINGTON,

Brighton, Sussex.

Lookalike



White Headed Bald Eagle



Michael Heseltine

Sir,

On a recent visit to the South of France (the zoo at St Jean Cap Ferrat to be precise), we noticed a white headed bald eagle in one of the enclosures that bore an uncanny resemblance to Michael Heseltine. Are they perhaps related? We think we should be told.

Yours,
J. COCKERILL & J. BECKET,

London SW15.

Spotted dick

Sir,

I must congratulate you on your cover of 24 May. Apart from both union flags being shown upside down and the king's crown being shown instead of the Queen's, it was spot on.

Yours faithfully,
IAN DUCKWORTH,

Rochdale, Lancs.

Fuzz buzz

Sir,

I read with interest your recent article concerning Councillor Lionel Jones, chairperson of the West Midlands Police Authority.

Crusading politics to one side for a moment I am surprised that in the 1990s, you, your informant or your readers, should find it unusual that anyone would require the use of a motor vehicle or telephone in order to carry out their appointed duties. Real accountability equates with accessibility something Councillor Jones has never shied away from even though the demands of policing mean being available 24 hours a day for 365 days of the year. Speaking on behalf of the some 2,700 civilian employees of this authority I can only say that if a mobile phone allows me to speak direct to the chairperson on matters of concern to my membership at whatever time of day those concerns may arise or wherever Councillor Jones maybe at the time, then long may he continue to use it.

As for the crusading aspects mentioned in your article, whilst many of these are of legitimate concern to my membership they are still subject to on-going investigations some of which were instigated by Councillor Jones and my members understand why he may not wish to comment at this stage.

Finally, now that we have established that the chair of this authority actually travels around and speaks by phone (even if this is a mobile phone) and in person to both the staff trade unions and our police colleagues it may be well to reflect that some of the problems that have beset this force in the recent past may have been prevented had previous post holders shown only a fraction of Councillor Jones's concern and interest in the reputation and running of this police authority.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID COOPER,
Branch Secretary, NALGO,

Birmingham.

Legless

Sir,

Although temporarily legless lying in a neurosurgical ward of a Midlands hospital — which is hampered but not yet hamstrung by the NHS reforms (sic) — I was much cheered by EYE *768 and the HP Sauce item revealing the Drum Majorette's pathetic and erroneous attempt to claim the BMA support the Tories' NHS reforms.*

You are wrong, however, to accept the peevish PM's diluted implication that the GENERAL PRACTITIONER *newspaper at least "is on the side of the Tories". As a regular reader I can assure you that it isn't, and that despite an excessive fondness for "news" items about trivial advances in contraception, cardiology and CFS (yuppie flu),* GP *is mainly a mix of sharp medico-political reporting and feature articles by GPs of all and any persuasion; (a profession talking to itself).*

A few months ago one of the editorial staff of GP *invited me to submit two articles about GP budget-holding (oops, fund holding) and I agreed pronto — since they offered to pay me — on the understanding I intended to be as rude and critical on the subject as logic and talent permitted.*

Both articles duly appeared, minimally edited, setting out the proposition that GP budget holding (oops again) is a muddled, ill-conceived and fundamentally unethical construction whose main achievement will be to entice bent GPs out into the open. Even if the impact of all this was less than that of a small earthquake in Chile, I hope you will agree that the editorial staff of GP *cannot really be much bothered by the potential wrath of their proprietor, the millionaire flak-jacketed modeller and helicopter enthusiast himself.*

Yours faithfully,
A GENERAL PRACTITIONER.

Wednesday weak

Sir,

In reply to your well-informed article concerning the extortionate fees charged to visiting fans at Hillsborough, Mr D. Brownbridge succeeds only in brown-nosing his club in the most pointless and embarrassing manner imaginable.

How good (or otherwise) a team Sheffield Wednesday are is not the issue, the shameful opportunism of its hierarchy is, however.

I have experienced Wednesday's "unimagined beauty" once this season, in a cup match at the Abbey Stadium, Cambridge; although the "full acoustic brilliance" of their Spion Kop seemed strangely muted that day. Enough said, D.B.?

OK. So the lad Atkinson has done well this season (as he also did at West Bromwich, Manchester United and, er, Cambridge United) but with generous financial help, no doubt; whereas the entire side fielded by John Beck on that day cost about £100,000, just enough to purchase a full set of toenail clippings from any one of Big Ron's sainted team.

By the way, Sheffield Wednesday were urinated upon from an astonishing height, as they would have been on any ground in the country, sorry.

Yours faithfully.
R. STUBBINGTON,

nr. Haverhill, Suffolk.

I-SPY

Submitted by David Crookes. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Piles

Sir,

As avid followers of the plight of the Captain's successful publication THE EUROPEAN, *I'm sure you would be interested to know that there were piles of the paper, which sponsors the European Division of the World League, two metres by two metres by two metres on either side of the road from Wembley Stadium to Wembley Park Station after the Monarchs' game against the Barcelona Dragons. These were being thrust into the hands of unfortunate passers-by. I pity those who had to clean up the platforms at Wembley Park after that.*

Yours faithfully,
MYKELL ROBINSON,

Liss, Hants.

Dunlarfin

Sir,

I am disappointed that no obituary referred to "Fatty Heffer's cruel cockney humour". The older that one gets, the more vivid one's memory of Battle for Britain.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE,

Hove, Sussex.

High wire act

Sir,

Have any other readers noticed the amazing resemblance between PRIVATE EYE, *the satirical magazine with a taste for piano-wire jokes and* PRIVATE EYE, *the investigative journal who accuses Punk/Hacienda guru Tony Wilson of "brazenly promoting groups named after aspects of Nazi Germany". I wonder if they are by any chance related?*

Yours faithfully,
ALAN PARKER,

Carentan, France.

Scales of justice

Sir,

Don't let a John Cleese joke (769) detract from the innate musicality of the German race (at any rate as shown during the nazi period). His piano-wire joke was based on fact and still makes Germans feel unconfortable. For the nazis did use the finest piano wire to hang von Stauffenberg and his fellow-plotters against Hitler. It was probably supplied by late unlamented Frau Helene Bechstein, the then head of the piano firm and from c. 1925 a girlfriend and financial backer of Hitler's — who presented her with the original MS of Mein Kampf. They did not waste such an expensive material on mere Jews, Gypsies and the mentally or physically handicapped. Hence the gas chambers.

Yours faithfully,
FRITZ SPIEGL,

Liverpool.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Some of the football Chelsea have played this afternoon is synonymous with some of the football Chelsea can play."
CAPITAL GOLD REPORTER
(Owen White)

"I never predict anything and I never will do."
PAUL GASCOIGNE, BBC RADIO
(Catherine L. McGlennan)

"My Seven year old who is now ten..."
LADY OLGA MAITLAND, ANGLIA TV
(Elena Moses)

"And in their second game of the season, Lancashire have at last notched up a victory."
ANON. CRICKET COMMENTATOR
(Paul Stump)

"Faith, Hope and Charity,
Love is the greatest of the three"
FRANCES NERO, TOP OF THE POPS, BBC1
(Mike McGinn)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
EXORCISM KIT.
WE HEAR A MYSTERIOUS DULL RAPPING SOUND.
EXORCISM KIT
YO, DUDES, HERE'S MY ADVICE, DONCHA EXORCISE DIS POLTERGEIST. IF YA TRY, YO, THEN YOU'RE DEAD COS IM THE SPOOK THAT'S GOT STREET CRED....

Letter from

Zimbabwe

from Our Own Correspondent

OUR PRESIDENT, who likes to be known as "Comrade", dreams of imposing a one-party political system on Zimbabwe at the time in African history when such dictatorships are going out of fashion.

Although Robert Mugabe's wishes are being frustrated by recalcitrant elements who quaintly think multi-party democracy is worth struggling for, a recent farcical by-election at Bikita West showed democracy is far from thriving.

A senior official of the ruling party ZANU (PF) came out from Harare and imposed his candidate on unwilling, resentful locals. And in the 1990 elections ZANU (PF) not only enjoyed grossly unequal access to the media, but for good measure its bully boys intimidated voters.

Students at the national university went on strike for three weeks in May protesting at government orders which mean a virtual ending of academic freedoms and include a demand that lecturers submit reading lists for official vetting. Many demoralised teaching staff have resigned. Comrade Mugabe simply declared that the students were "making a nuisance of themselves" and suggested ominously that a new intake of more docile students might have to be selected.

Marxism may be dying everywhere else, but here its stale rhetoric holds fast. "Comrade" is used for all government ministers and the highest level of party organisation is a "politburo". Our national flag carries a red star, reflecting Mugabe's socialist aspirations.

Meanwhile Ethiopia's Colonel Mengistu, who arrived at the end of May, was an embarrassment our government could have done without. His notoriety as a brutal dictator and creator of Ethiopia's famines rebounded on us and will make western governments even less willing to provide aid. Mengistu had already bought a large farm here with funds stolen from his country and had sent his family ahead of him. Because he helped southern Rhodesia's guerrillas during the civil war, and the two leaders are buddies, asylum was inevitable.

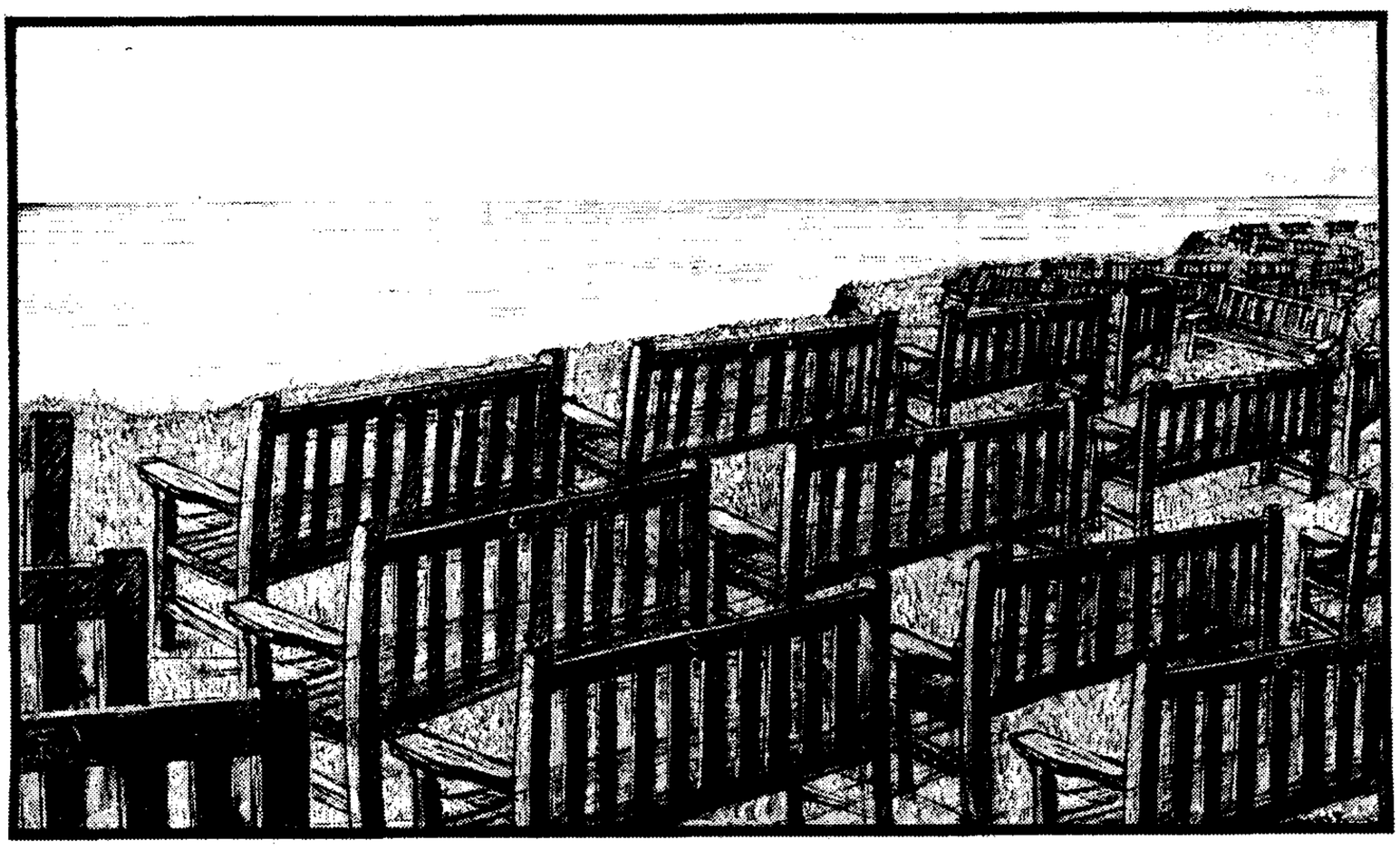
Alienation from the ruling party is so common — especially among the young — that ZANU (PF) has had to cancel rallies for a lack of activists. University students have often led public protests against what they call "plunder, slander and looting sprees" by party officials, the protests usually put down by brutal police riot squads.

There is also deep cynicism about corruption within the government, read ZANU (PF). Leading party figures have exploited business openings or bought large farms once owned by whites. Even low-ranking party officials commonly abuse their power to harass and beat up innocent members of the public.

Comrade Mugabe alienated many well-wishers with his dismal performance in our first major financial scandal, involving Politburo members, Cabinet ministers and top bureaucrats. Forced by public outrage to appoint an independent commission headed by a respected high court judge, Mugabe then refused to allow justice to take its course. When the minister for political affairs, Frederick Shava, was prosecuted in 1989, Mugabe pardoned him. This prompted our attorney-general to declare that in future he would not even bother to initiate further charges against members of the ruling party.

But there are other dark shadows growing over our country: a terrifying two million of our 8.6 million population are infected with the HIV virus and there will be an explosion of dying Aids patients over the next few years. Unemployment is worsening, with just one in five school-leavers finding work, while soaring inflation adds to our problems. Barter is back in fashion, with cooking oil or flour being swapped for a goat, while oil prices are unnecessarily high because Mugabe did a disastrous fixed price deal with Nigeria after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

While South Africa is officially shunned, with our government pushing hardest to maintain sanctions, such restrictions are not meant for us. We depend almost totally on trade with the apartheid state while most of our foreign currency from tourism comes from the ubiquitous — and rich — kaffir-bashers.



CHRISTOPHER LOGUE'S

TRUE STORIES

Illuminated by Bert Kitchen

DURING a recent visit to Scotland, Mr Ivan Stancloff, the Bulgarian Ambassador, was given a tour of Strathclyde's extensive cycle-path network accompanied by councillor Margaret Morrison. They, together with Thomas Graham MP (of the Bulgarian Friendship Committee) then mounted bikes and pedalled to the Bridge of Weir, making a short detour on their way to admire a monumental sculpture: *The Lost Legion* by Mr David Kemp, which is made out of redundant gas-bottles. After lunch with Councillor Irene Gilgalion, the Ambassador visited the internationally famous Shawl collection at the Paisley Museum and, after that, the possibility of a cultural exchange plan for environmental-cycle-path-art was considered.

FOUND guilty of killing a fellow taxi driver and sentenced to death by shooting, Mr Huang Chin-hua donated his vital organs to Taiwan's Veterans' Hospital. However, though he had been executed, Mr Chin-hua was found to be alive on his arrival at the hospital and the surgeons refused to operate. Commenting on this incident, Mr Lin Hsi-hu, the Vice-minister of Justice, said: "Chin-hua was a death row convict. The proper authorities collected him from the hospital and he was given a second bullet. The hospital had no business to put him on a life-support machine — so they have lost the organs. In the meantime we have reformed the law and our executioners are now allowed to aim at the head instead of the heart.

AT a full meeting of Frinton Council, the Chairman, Councillor Stanley Shelton said: It is with great reluctance that I have approved a ban on memorial benches donated by relatives in memory of their loved ones, because our clifftop has become overrun with such seating. At least forty benches are in place, many of them only a pace or two apart. We hope that people will think of other lasting symbols. Tree plaques, for example. And we could do with benches in other parts of the town."

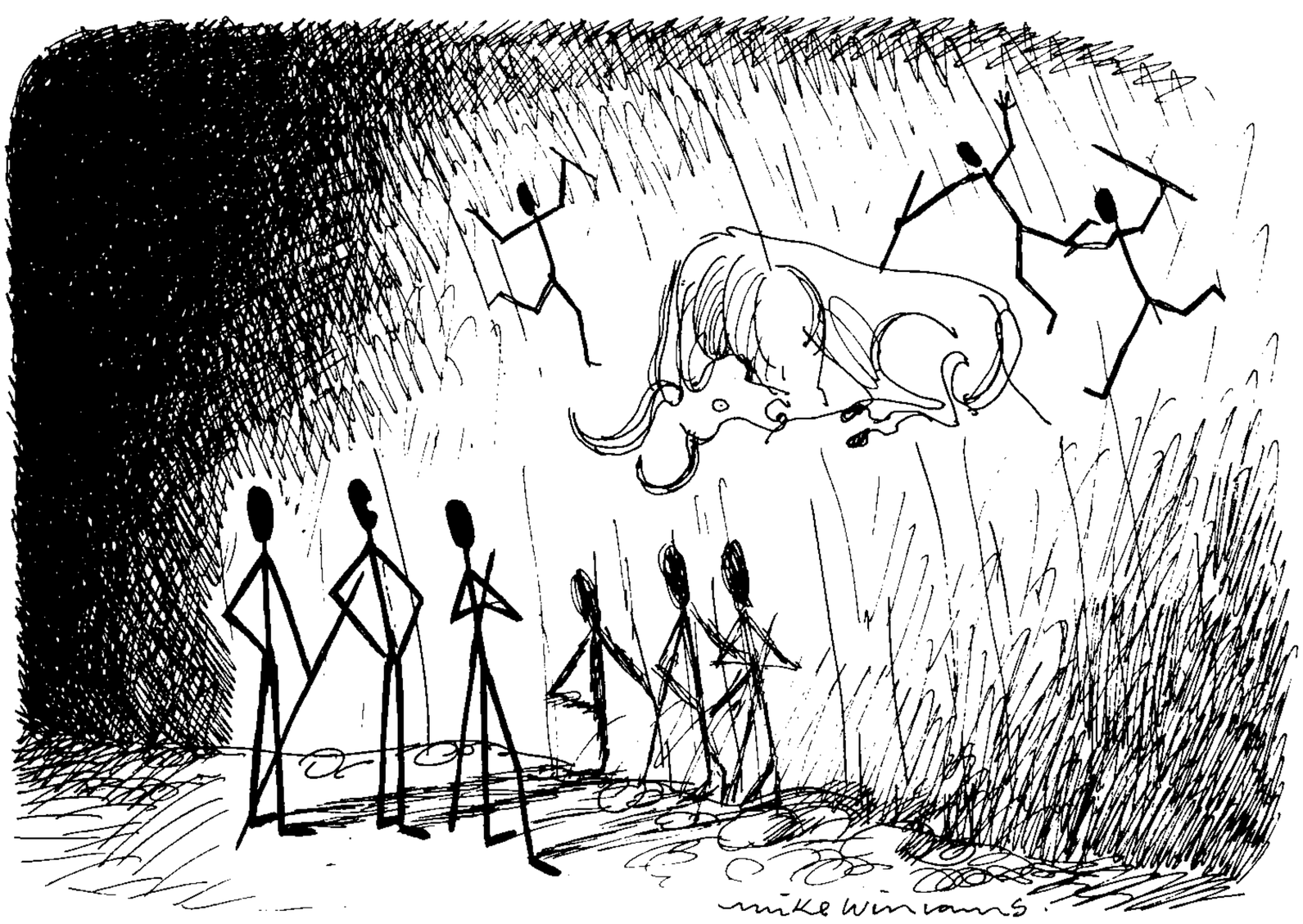
ASKED by the Jarama police to give an explanation for her rowdy behaviour, Mrs Jean Pawi said: "My friends and I paid £4.00 each for the tickets to see Clint Eastward in The Rookie. The film began 40 minutes late and with what, after a few seconds, we realised was the last reel. then there was a pause of fifteen minutes. When the screening resumed it was obvious that they had put one of the middle reels on. We complained and there was another pause. Finally the projector turned again and they showed us the beginning of Dirty Harry. So we all walked out and demanded a refund. This was refused. Then the manager offered to restart the film. But it was now about 2 am. So we dumped him and the projectionist in the Waha Canal and went home.

GIVING evidence to the Coroner's Court, Mr Malcolm Millard, a milkman, agreed that when delivering to the Slade, Headington, early on the morning in question, he had stepped over the dead body of the homeowner, Mr Timothy Burden, and continued on his rounds in the usual way. "In the course of my rounds it is quite a common occurrence to find people lying on their paths or on the doorsteps of their houses," Mr Millard said. "It is the policy of our dairy not to disturb them."

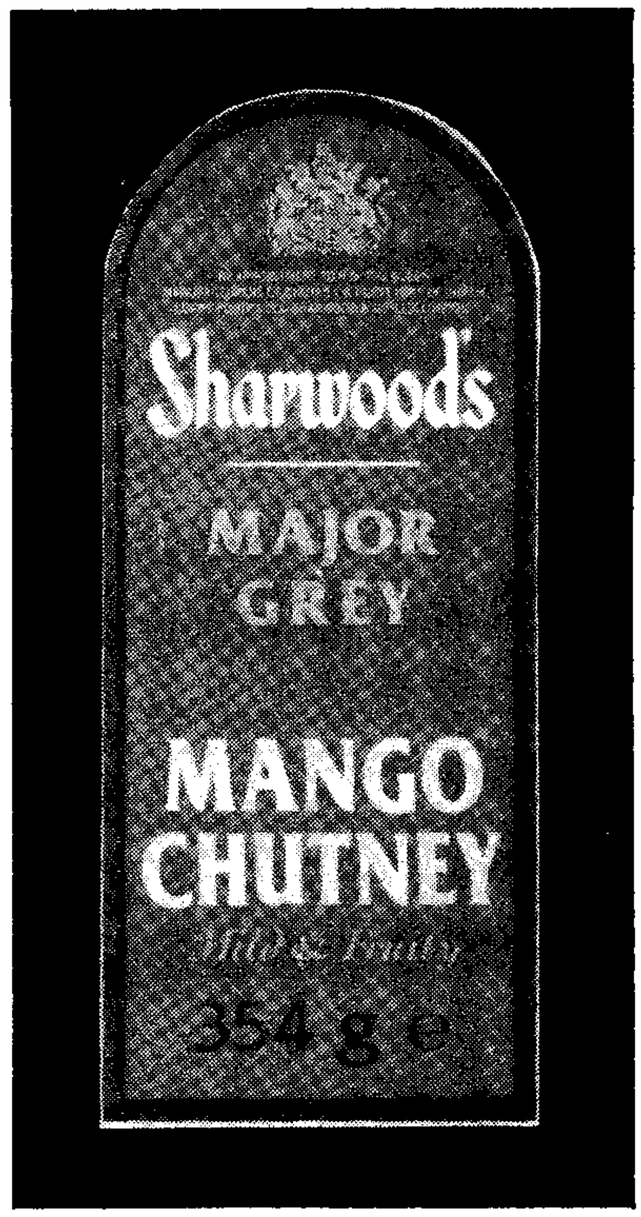
ARRIVING on the wrong day for her trial, Mrs Shirley Robinson of Tortola, the Virgin Isles, was remanded in custody for disorderly conduct after she answered the Magistrate, Mrs Mavis Vowell's question as to why she was early by saying: "I am going to see the father of my child — whose name I have forgotten, so I shall have to spend some time looking for him."

INFORMATION: Gryffe Weekly News 14.4.91; China Post 17.4.91; East Anglian Times 20.4.91; Malay Mail 14.2.91; Oxford Times 19.4.91; BVI Beacon 4.2.91.

MONITORS: Peter Taylor, Simon Tandy, Donald M. McNicoll, A.S. Flavell, Kael Wallendszus, Mrs David Seal.



"He's got you alright but I don't think he's captured Og at all."



Where Were You When Kennedy Was Assassinated?

EVERYONE can remember exactly where they were when they heard the news that Radio 3 Chief John Drummond had assassinated the character of popular, charismatic violinist Nigel "Nige" Kennedy.

The world was stunned when the loner Drummond struck his fatal blow from the fifth floor of the BBC gramophone record depository at Broadcasting House.

For three years Kennedy had caught the imagination of the younger generation with his good looks, his energy, his unconventional style and his refusal to bow down to the Establishment.

Famous quotes fell from his lips, from "Ask not what I can play in in your country — you're getting the Four Seasons" to the now legendary "Ich bin ein Berlin Philhamoniker."

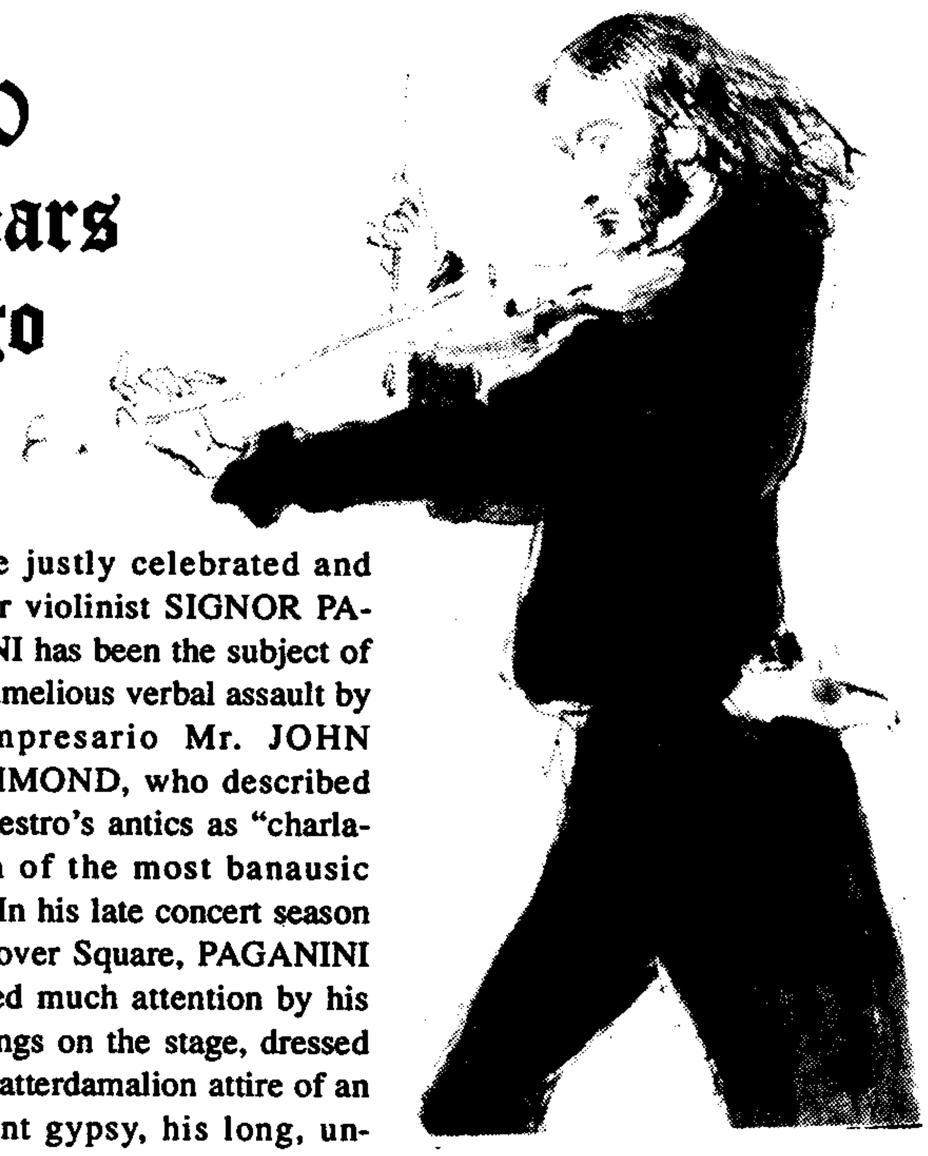
But then came the terrible day when, for reasons which still remain a mystery, the crazed Radio 3 Chief fired his lethal shot.

"Kennedy is a wonderful violinist and a very good friend of mine. However he should get his hair cut and buy himself a proper suit. Honestly, he looks no better than those people you see in the King's Road on Saturday, when you're shopping for croutons."

Where were you when this historic event took place? Let us know, on a postcard, and win 100 free tickets to Radio 3's Festival of Contemporary Music at St. John's Smith Square, 24 June.

100 Years Ago

Paganini by Landseer



The justly celebrated and popular violinist SIGNOR PAGANINI has been the subject of a contumelious verbal assault by the impresario Mr. JOHN DRUMMOND, who described the maestro's antics as "charlatanism of the most banausic kind". In his late concert season at Hanover Square, PAGANINI attracted much attention by his cavortings on the stage, dressed in the tatterdamalion attire of an itinerant gypsy, his long, unkempt hair sticking from the side of his head like the quills of "the fretful porpentine". Mr Drummond's ire was particularly aroused by the italian's habit of holding his violin behind his head while playing the late SIGNOR VIVALDI's "Four Seasons" with one finger of his left hand.

ADVERTISEMENT

The Gnomelys Bank

A Message from the Chairman, Sir Quentin Tin-Tin

There has been a lot of rubbish in the media recently about how the big banks are ripping off small businesses and generally wasting huge amounts of their customers' money.

That is why we have decided to nail this lie once and for all by spending £500 million of your money in taking huge advertisements like this in all the national newspapers.

Furthermore we have rented poster sites in every major city in the country to hammer home the message that we are looking very carefully after every penny of your money.

There is no waste. Your money is safe in our pockets.

Issued by Hargle, Bogle and Pratt on behalf of Gnomebank Plc.

How They Are Related

Fred Flintstone = Woman in Planet of the Apes

Ethelfred the Unpleasant = Mistress Squelch

The Duke of Yorker = Anne of Cleavage

Freddie the Dreamer = Madame Embonpoint

Truman Capote = Colin Welch

Milton Truman = Raquel Hayhoe-Flint

Fred Trueman = Raquel Welch

Some children no-one is interested in

Glenda Wyn-Slagg

Fleet Street's Drum-Majorette!!

Madame Croissant?!! Didya read about her, Mister?!! She's the Frogs' answer to our own Mrs T. (Gawd bless you, Ma'am, wherever you are!!)

So, the Frogs' leading fraulein (shome mishtake shurely, Ed?) reckons that Britain's fellas come bottom of the love-poll?! And one limey guy in four is a nancy-boy?!!

Come off it, Madame Crouton!?! Just 'cos they don't like to kiss a gal with garlicky breath doesn't mean they're all wimps 'n' washouts!?!!

Hats off to Madame Cresson!?! France's gallant Gallic pin-up of a PM!?! At last someone's had the guts to spell out the terrible truth about Britain's so-called men!?! They're all hopeless in the sack and it's not only their wrists that are limp!? (Geddit?! I don't, which is why I'm writing this piece!?!) Hats off to Monsieur Mitterand's mistress!?!

Chère sir,

Nous sommes le highly-respected firm de advocats, Pierre Cartier-Fuch et Partners, qui representons le Président Mitterand. Payez-up immédiatement.

Jonathan Miller?!!! Arencha sick of him?!! He's the arty egghead you see on the telly a gibberin' and a jabberin'... so the dotty doctor wants to give Britain the elbow?!! It seems we don't tell him he's a genius often enough!?! Aaah!? Poor ickle-johnny diddums!!!?! Go on, clear off, Dr Cleverdick and take it out on the Ities for a change?!!

What's up, Doc?!? I say arrivederci to the whingeing (you've already done him, Ed).

Here they are, Glenda's Ascot amorosos!?!

A.N. Wilson — Now you've given up God, you'll have Sunday mornings free!? Give us a ring if you feel like a service!? Geddit?!!

Tim Heald — *(Who Heald, Ed?)* He's the man who wrote the biography of the D of E?! Never mind!?! We've all got to do something in life!?!!

Christopher Martin-Jenkins — Crazy name, crazy guy!!?!

Byeeeee!!

Victory Parade Secret Revealed

by Our Man in New York
Graydon Carter-Ruck

NEW YORKERS had been asking for days the origin of the millions of tons of tickertape which rained down on Stormin' Norman Schwarzkopf and his gallant forces as they marched down Broadway to the tune of (get on with it, Ed).

I can now reveal that the city authorities were offered a large quantity of wastepaper by a mysterious fat benefactor.

Said a spokesman for the city, "Millions of unsold copies of *The European* arrived on a fleet of barges up the Hudson River complete with a giant shredder and a note saying 'There's plenty more where this lot came from. Yours, Cap'n Bob'"

Mayor Dimkins is 79.

GULF WAR PICTURE LIBRARY No 248
'MARCH TO GLORY'
DEEP BEHIND ENEMY LINES, THE EVIL DICTATOR WAS CONCERNED...
IT'S QUIET. TOO DAMN QUIET. WHERE ARE THE ALLIED FORCES?
WELL SIR, ACCORDING TO LATEST INTELLIGENCE REPORTS THEIR CURRENT LOCATION IS...
...5th AVENUE MOVING INTO BROADWAY EN MASSE.
MARCH DON'T MARCH
WELL DONE BOYS
I SEE AND WHAT'S GENERAL SCHWARZKOPF'S CUNNING STRATEGY?
ER...BIG TUB-THUMPING PARADE, FOLLOWED BY A BLACK TIE DINNER DANCE AND THEN THE JOHNNY CARSON SHOW.
SO THERE'S NO DANGER?
WELL, I DON'T KNOW. THAT TICKER TAPE IS PRETTY DANGEROUS AND THERE'S A REAL RISK OF HEART DISEASE FROM TOO MANY CELEBRATION BANQUETS...
NO, TO US FOOL?
BANG!
NO. WE'RE COMPLETELY SAFE. WE CAN DO ANYTHING WE LIKE.
THEN WHAT ARE THEY CELEBRATING?
VICTORY!
OUR HISTORIC VICTORY OVER THE KURDS AND SHIITES!
THAT'S VERY KIND OF THEM! HOORAY!
WE TOO MUST HAVE A PARADE!
YUP, LINE UP ALL OUR POLITICAL OPPONENTS!!
KURDS
KURDS
ITEs

Lines Written On The Occasion Of The Historic Victory Of Mr Graham Gooch Against The West Indies At Leeds

by William Rees-McGonagall

'Twas in the summer of Nineteen Hundred and Ninety One
When there was plenty of rain but not much sun
That the most historic test match ever was played
Whose glorious memory will never fade.

From the Caribbean Sea came a mighty side
Whose cricketing skill was famed both far and wide
There was no team in the world they could not beat
As many of them towered up over ten feet.

At their very names the English hearts froze
Patterson, Walsh, Marshall and Curtly Ambrose.
And this was only to speak of their bowling attack
Without reckoning how hard the ball their batsmen could whack.

Richardson, Richards, Logie and Dujon,
When it came to sxies, each of them could hit a huge one.
No wonder poor Gooch thought his team would lose
And probably end up covered with many a bruise.

Few could remember the last time England had won
It was way back in the Sixties, when the PM was Wilson.
At that time men were setting foot on the moon
And ever since England had taken the wooden spoon.

But this time what a wondrous change was wrought
As every catch by the English fielders was caught
Gooch, Hick, Atherton and Ramprakash
Among the newcomers the latter cut a particular dash.

Many times the weather threatened to intervene
As over the ground huge black clouds were seen.
Many was the time the West Indians appealed against the light
But Umpire Dicky Bird said, "Play on, it is quite all right."

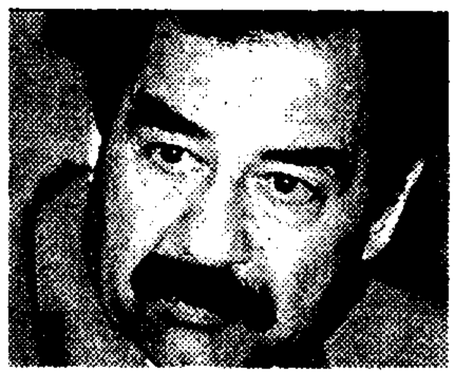
On the first morning as eleven o'clock struck
Everyone thought Gooch and Atherton would soon be out for a duck.

In the event the first over was fine
As the new ball in the hands of Ambrose began to lose its shine.

Then Atherton played on a quick one from Patterson.
Back in the pavilion they all said, "What's the matter, son?"
[The next 307 verses of ball-by-ball poetry have been omitted for reasons of space.]

And thus Gooch was not out for one hundred and fifty four.
Batting right through the innings, which had only been done four times before.
By Geoffrey Boycott, to name but one
And another, of course, was Sir Leonard Hutton.
[Another 761 verses relating to famous records have been omitted. Full text on Gnomefax p.94.]

Oh 'twas a famous victory for Gooch and his men
We shall never see its like again.
And everyone in England felt astonishingly proud
Especially the seven wet spectators who were in the crowd.

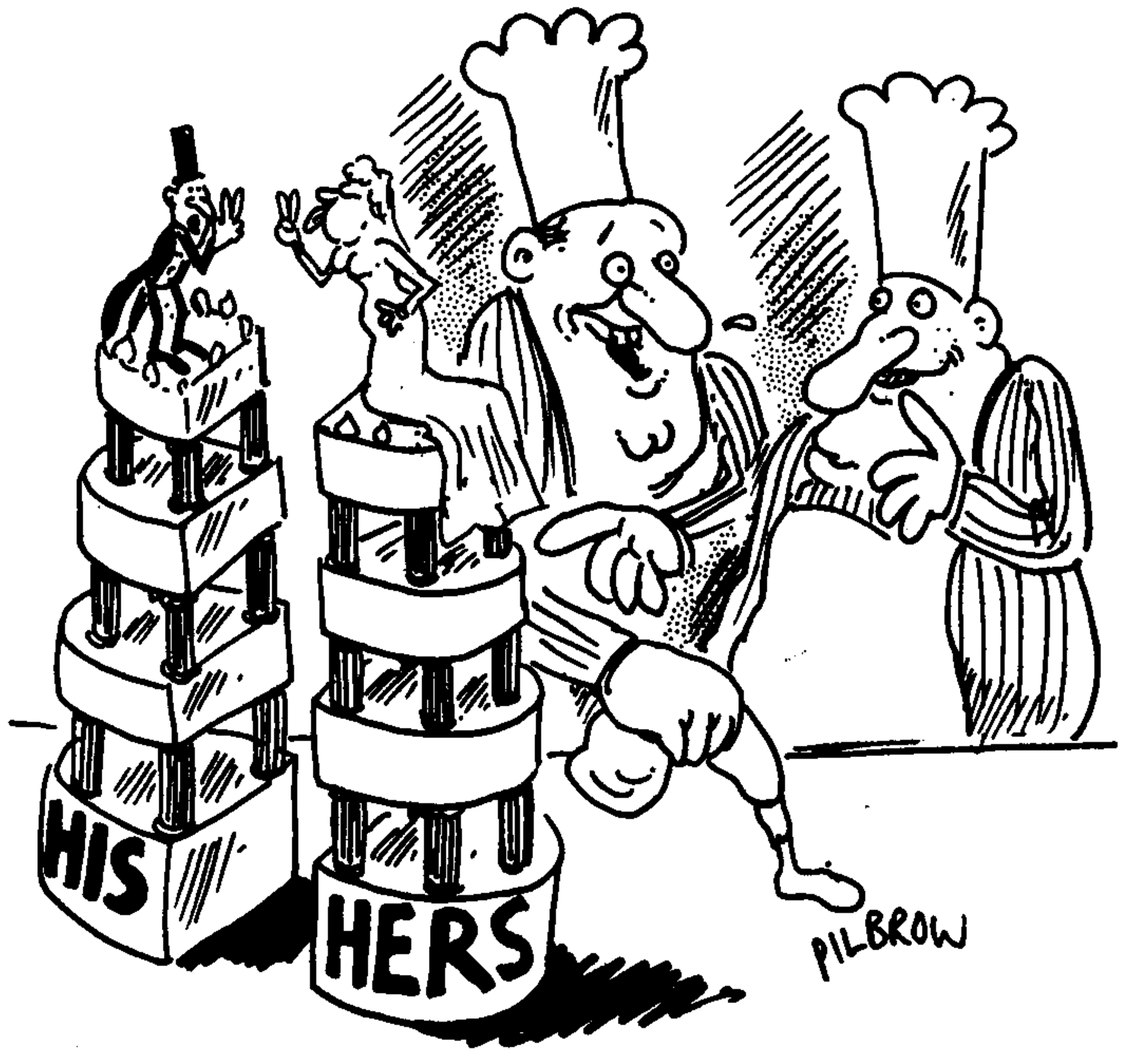


Yes, It's Iraq Rhyming Slang

(As approved by the Foreign Office)

Saddam	**Jolly good man**
President Hussein	**Important he remain**
Baghdad	***Not so bad***
Ba-ath Party	**Hale and hearty**
Kurds	**Frightful turds**
Shi-ites	**Awful shites**
Gulf war	**Fearful bore**
Kuwait invasion	**Unimportant occasion**
Supergun	**Send him another one**
Iraq	**No need for us to go back**

(That's enough hypocrisy. Ed)

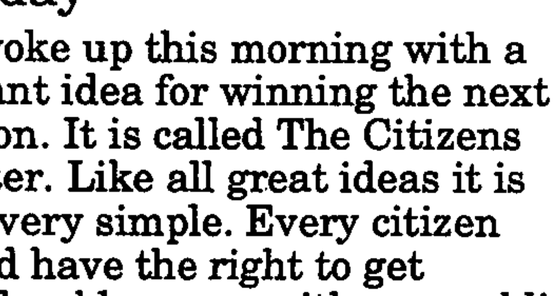


"It's a divorce cake."

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Monday

I woke up this morning with a brilliant idea for winning the next election. It is called The Citizens Charter. Like all great ideas it is very, very simple. Every citizen should have the right to get considerably angry with any public amenity which fails to provide a proper service. For instance, a commuter is waiting at a station, let us say Hayward's Heath, for the 7.35 to take him to Victoria. He has a meeting with an important overseas buyer at 9.30. The train is 17 minutes late, owing to leaves on the line. The result is that he is late for the meeting, and a vital export order is thereby lost. As things stand at present, the citizen has no redress in



such circumstances. But under my new Charter, he will have the right to sue British Rail for compensation.

When I told my wife Norman about my idea, she was very enthusiastic. She at once thought of another application for the Charter. "What happens if you get held up in a traffic jam on the motorway?" she said. "Will you be able to sue all the other motorists who are in front of you?" She told me that this very circumstance had arisen last week, when she was on the way to a lunch given by Hello magazine. "I was so late", she said, "that they weren't able to put in my story about how you keep me awake all night by covering the bed with those silly red boxes. I had to give it to the Mail on Sunday instead".

Tuesday

I am getting very considerably annoyed again by the way my predecessor keeps on telling foreign newspapers that I am not doing a good job as prime minister. This morning Mr O'Donnell brought in a copy of Sumo Sushi, the well-known Japanese paper for the raw fish industry, which had a big headline in Japanese saying, "Phew What A Thatcher: Iron Maiden Calls For Return To Poll Tax". How silly can you get?! If I was to bring back the poll tax, Labour would shoot ahead on the polls, and we might be in very considerable danger of losing the next election! You obviously don't have to be very bright to be prime minister, was what I thought when I read her interview.

Wednesday

I've had another brilliant idea for my Charter. One of the real menaces of the modern world is when you have a ball-point pen in your pocket and it starts to leak, marking your shirt and suit and sometimes your vest, if it is winter-time. Under my Charter, you would be entitled to recover the cost of the dry-cleaning from the manufacturers. This is the kind of thing which will show the country that the Conservative Party under my leadership has got the real vision that is required for the 1990s. Oh yes, Mrs Thatcher would never have thought of this.

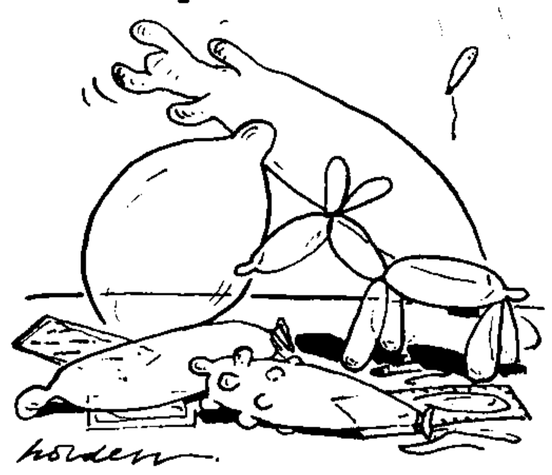
Thursday

All the papers are saying this morning that I cannot make up my mind over Europe. On the contrary, I have always made my position precisely clear. We should wait and see what happens, and then decide what to do. What could be clearer than that?

And another thing I have decided very decisively. Today I am going to watch the Test Match at Leeds. As I said to my friend Chris, "I am sure it will be worth watching, even though the West Indies, like the Conservatives, always win."

Friday

At the Cabinet meeting this morning I told them all that today I was going to finish off my number one opponent for once and for all. "But she's in Japan", said Norma Lamont. "Oh no", I explained, "I mean Mr Kinnock". Mr Lamont was tired because he had just come back from a very important meeting in Brussels. He passed round some



special balloons he had bought in Belgium, marked "For Union In Europe. Let's Keep It Safe". Everyone laughed, especially when Chris said that "it might help the Hard ECU". I was glad to see that not everyone had forgotten my idea of the "parallel currency" which I have explained in this diary before.

Later in the day, in the House of Commons, I made the toughest speech I have ever made, about the danger of the Labour Party winning the next election. I didn't pull any punches. "If that lot of people get in", I said, pointing in no uncertain terms to the empty bench opposite where Mr Kinnock and his friends usually sit, "the country will really be in a not inconsiderable mess". All our side cheered, even Mr Ridley, who shook his fist at me enthusiastically.

Saturday

Today is the Queen's birthday and Norman and I went to see the Trooping of the Colour. It is a very traditional spectacle which I in no small measure enjoyed. It is also the day when the Birthday Honours are announced. This was the chance for me to show that the John Major style is very different from that of his predecessor. I chose:

1. Cyril Washbrook whose autograph I still have in my album from the day in 1957 he scored 33 not out against Surrey at the Oval. It says "Good Luck Brian from Cyril". Brian, I should explain, was a boy at school. I swapped it with him in exchange for a set of mint-condition Cape of Good Hope triangular stamps.
2. Chris Barber. We all used to listen to him in the bank. "This will really appeal to young people", I said to my friend Chris. "Especially to all those over fifty", he said.
3. Brian Clough. He was never in charge of England. "Just like you" said Mr. Waldegrave. He now has four stars against his name in the little grey book. Oh yes.

These honours are symbolic of what I must modestly record they are now calling Majorism. Norman read this in the papers and said "What does it mean?" I replied "Isn't it obvious? Majorism. It means 'Major' plus 'ism'". Honestly, sometimes people can be very slow to catch on to new ideas.

Sunday

I cannot believe it! Mr O'Donnell has brought in a copy of the Katmandu Courier, of which the main headline was "Iron Lady Lashes 'Feeble' Major Over Europe". I ignored this completely, but later in the day I thought up another clause for my Charter, which I keep in a special ring-pull folder which Norman bought me for Christmas. It has a yellow cover, marked "Great Idea!" This would be for people who take a new job, such as a senior managerial post, and who then find that their predecessor continually makes trouble for them. They would be entitled to full compensation for their hurt feelings and loss of reputation.

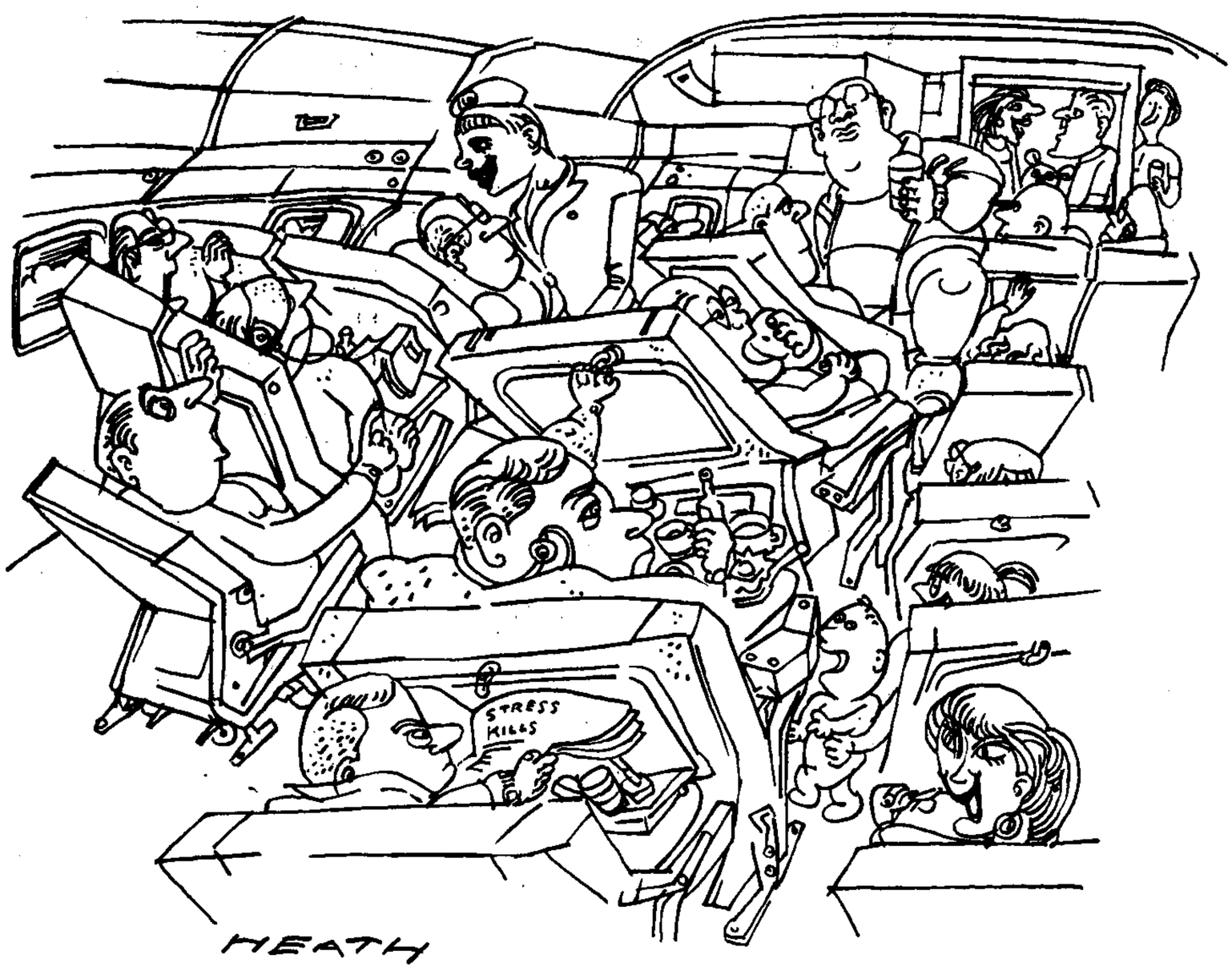
NHS Slam Door on Berks Couple

Injured Toddler in M'way Dash

by Pol Fot of the Daily Mirror

A YOUNG Berkshire couple were callously turned away from an ordinary NHS hospital yesterday, after being forced to wait 30 seconds to get treatment for their seriously injured son, Wills, 10.

Thanks to heartless treatment by the staff of the Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading, the couple had no option but to put their sick kiddy into a Rolls Royce and be driven, with a full police escort, 50 miles up the motorway to an expensive £2000-a-day private clinic in London.



Great Bores Of Today

"...I think it really is getting serious now I mean the chap next door is trying to sell his house and he's had no offers a year ago he ran his own company employed twenty-five people and now he's having counselling and he's not the only one there was this other chap who was a manager in a city bank and he was just told one morning that they were closing his division only 37 and he was the top man both his kids were in private schools these are the people that they are meant to be encouraging and it's going to get worse before it gets better I can't see any light at the end of the tunnel in our drive there are three BMWs with For Sale signs on them I met this chap who used to run an indoor skiing centre and he's had to sell up and go to Portugal it's when people like him go down you know that it's hurting the South East is the worst it's like Poland where I am another Bacardi for you Maurice?..."

POETRY CORNER

Lines On The 150th Anniversary of Punch

So. Farewell then
Punch.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

Celeb

LIGGER
JANE SEYMOUR! YOU'RE LOOKING AS RADIANT AS EVER MY LOVE.
DON'T YOU START GOING ON ABOUT MY LOOKS, GARY. I'VE DONE INTERVIEWS ABOUT NOTHING ELSE RECENTLY.
AS I SAID TO "HELLO" MAGAZINE, THE OLDER I GET, THE LESS I CARE ABOUT MY PHYSICAL APPEARANCE. I'M NOT SCARED OF WRINKLES.
OUTWARD ATTRACTIVENESS SHOULDN'T AFFECT HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF AS A PERSON. IT'S WHAT YOU HAVE INSIDE YOU THAT'S IMPORTANT.
I COULDN'T AGREE MORE, JANE.
A BOTTLE OF VODKA, TWO OF THESE PILLS AND I FEEL LIKE A GREEK GOD MYSELF.

Sun SPORT

THE SUN SAYS

REJOICE! WE BEAT THE COONS!

(or rather we don't say that but we'd like to)

THIS IS THE FACE OF EVIL

Why Is This Killer Kiddy Still At Large?

THIS is J. Fotherington-Thomas, 8, a pupil at the £25,000 St. Biscuits preparatory school, whom we can identify as the mystery assailant whose attempt to murder the second-in-line to the throne shocked a nation.

The entire British press knew perfectly well the name of the toddler serial-killer whose golf club last week lacerated the skull of Prince William, 9.

But only the National Enquirer has the guts to report the truth of the crime that nearly brought an end to 2,000 years of Royal heritage.

(Reprinted from the National Enquirer)

Prep School Psychopath

That £500 Labour Party Fundraising Sizzler Menu In Full

Gordon Brown Windsor Soup

— ❀ —

Stephen Fried Mushrooms

— ❀ —

Kinnoq au Vin

— ❀ —

Rumpole Steak

— ❀ —

Ham à la Sessions

— ❀ —

Elton Mowbray Pie

— ❀ —

Hattersley Mange Tout. Cauliflower Follets

— ❀ —

Off the Trolley

Drabble Tart. Peach Melvyn. Nigelly and Custard

— ❀ —

Coffee

Neskaufmann or Gould Blend

— ❀ —

Drinks

Kir Hardie. Red Rosé. Champagne. Coke

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: The Duke of Edinburgh is seventy.

Now read on...

"THREE score years and ten. That's what it says in the Bible...the old version, of course, not that terrible A.S.P. thingie..."

"What on earth are you talking about?" Diana glanced up from her copy of the National Enquirer and brushed a small crumb of exquisite toast from her perfectly formed lips. A sudden shaft of June sunlight streamed in through the leaded windows of the Dellingpole Suite at Highgrove onto the Parker-Bowles table where Charles and Diana sat taking a leisurely breakfast.

Charles explained.

"Three score years and ten. Seventy. Pater's birthday. I hope you sent him a card."

"Ya. Ya."

"Oh good. I left you a selection of rather fine ones with sort of reproduction watercolour thingies. Did you choose one of those?"

"No. They were really naff, Chazzo. Especially the desert scene with the tank in it."

"Oh. Sir Hugh rather liked that one. He said it was the best I'd done yet." Charles ignored Diana's tactless faux pas. "He said the cappuccino reminded him of the early work of Jean Phillipe Embonpoint. Surely you've heard of him?"

Diana did not answer his question but continued:

"I sent the old boy one of Madonna at Wembley. When you open it, it says, '70 Today. Hope you are still feeling yourself.' Fergie helped me choose it."

Charles looked puzzled and took a spoonful of his hi-fibre lentil cornflakes with lo-fat hedgehog milk.

Feeling himself? What was the point of that? And why the Madonna? It wasn't Christmas, it was a birthday. Heavens, young people really were extraordinary, the sort of things they got up to. Some of them cut holes in their trousers deliberately and made their hair stick up all over the place...

"That's our duty done", Diana interrupted his musings on contemporary culture. "So we don't have to go to your father's do."

Charles was shocked.

"Of course we have to go. I mean he's seventy. It's a milestone. He's not getting any younger...he can't look forward to all that many more birthdays...he's getting frail and Mother really is going to have to retire and look after him."

Diana laughed and got up from the table.

"You can go, Chazza. He's your old man, but Bunty Coker has got me centre court seats for the Burgdorfer Lager finals at Hastings. We're going to meet Gino Panatella...He's yummy."

Charles bit his lip. She was trying to provoke him, he could tell, but he determined not to rise to the bait. Instead he would make a particular effort to get to Windsor early and talk to his father seriously.

As Sir Laurens had put it in his book "Yen Buddhism: A Beginner's Guide"...How did it go?... "The birds look after the eggs and then the eggs look after the birds." How true that was. How very true indeed. He would tell his father that he had to take care of himself.

"YOU must take care of yourself." Charles shouted above the rumble of the wheels but his advice went unheeded as the Duke cracked the whip fiercely over the straining team pulling his coach and four. There was Slit-Eyes, his favourite

Nanette, and behind them, Flanagan and Allen, the dappled greys pulling the Duke and his son across the verdant sward of Windsor Great Park. The bright June sunshine...*(You've had that bit. Ed.)*

"Take me," said Charles. "there's nothing wrong with me. Dr Merrydown says I'm 100%. Aaargh..."

As Charles spoke the carriage hit a ridge and jolted, sending a searing spasm of pain through his back. The Duke yelled: "Bloody gardeners. I told them before to level that bit out. You on for a swim after this? The pool should be nice and cold. I told Whittam-Smith to turn the heater off. Bloody idiot was getting it up to 50°."

Charles shuddered at the thought. Already his bad arm was beginning to throb and the pain in his back was growing worse.

The Duke leapt down from the carriage handing the reins to his groom, Deedes, and shouted up to Charles.

"Last one to the pool is a girl's blouse."

He ran athletically towards the poolhouse as Charles painfully lowered himself onto Terra Firma and limped after him.

"Er...er...er..."

"ER...er...er..." Charles attempted to engage his father's attention as, in a cloud of spray the agile septuagenarian ploughed his way through the azure blue water on his 39th length. "You see, Diana and I, we feel at your age Pater you should ease up a bit, maybe think about retirement, it's very taxing for a man who's no longer in the prime of life..."

The wiry figure of the Prince consort was now preparing to dive from the top board.

"Get out of the way, you bloody fool. Here I come! Germonimo-o-o-o-o!"

It was too late. When he came to, Charles found his father bent over him, pounding his chest with his fists.

"Good to have you back, boy. Thought you were a gonner for a minute."

Charles coughed weakly and spat out some chlorine flavoured water. He groaned and the Duke deftly turned him over, saying:

"You look terrible. If I were you, I'd give the party a miss. Have an early night. We don't want your grandmother wearing you out. You know what she's like at parties when she's had a few...

(To be continued)

Who's Who In The Mega-Snob Chelsea Row That All London Is Talking About (Except Everybody)

Research by **H. Montgomery-Massivesnob**

At No. 23 Stalegrass Crescent

CHARLES SAATCHI, 41, multi-billionaire advertising supremo and art collector, brother of the more famous Horace Saatchi, founder of the legendary firm Thatchi and Thatchi, who originated the slogan "Vote Conservative", which won the Tories three elections in a row. He has a large collection of modern money.

MARGARET THATCHI, 65, wife of Sir Denis Thatchi, the multi-millionaire cousin of Doris Saatchi, widow of Boris Saatchi, the Russian immigrant who invented the slogan "Labour Camps Aren't Working" which lost Stalin the 1939 election.

Screaming **LORD SAATCHI**, 62, famous for having lost more by-elections than anyone else in history, on the slogan "I'm Not Working At The Moment — Could You Spare Me Something For A Lost Deposit, guv".

At No. 24 Stalegrass Crescent

The Honourable **JASPER SYTTINGE-TENNANT**, 62, younger son of the late Lord Glenbastard, owner of the 4,000 million-acre Auchterfascist estate in Scotland. Unemployed for the past 45 years, Syttinge-Tennant was formerly married to Lady Ludmilla Glenmilla, who disappeared over the Channel, in a small aircraft, on Christmas Day 1994 on her way to present the Fuhrer with a pair of hand-knitted bed-socks.

Lady **MARY-LOU TENNANT**, 46, (née Astoria Waldorf-banger). Three times divorced, Lady Tennant is a keen collector of sulphuric acid, which she likes to throw over the neighbours' Rolls Royces.

MICHAEL HOROVIDEO, 54, Britain's best-known uninvited tenant (see above). Claimed "squatter's rights" in basement flat in 1967, and has been living there in bed ever since. Organiser of the Wye-on-Wye literary festival, 1976.

TV

New Series

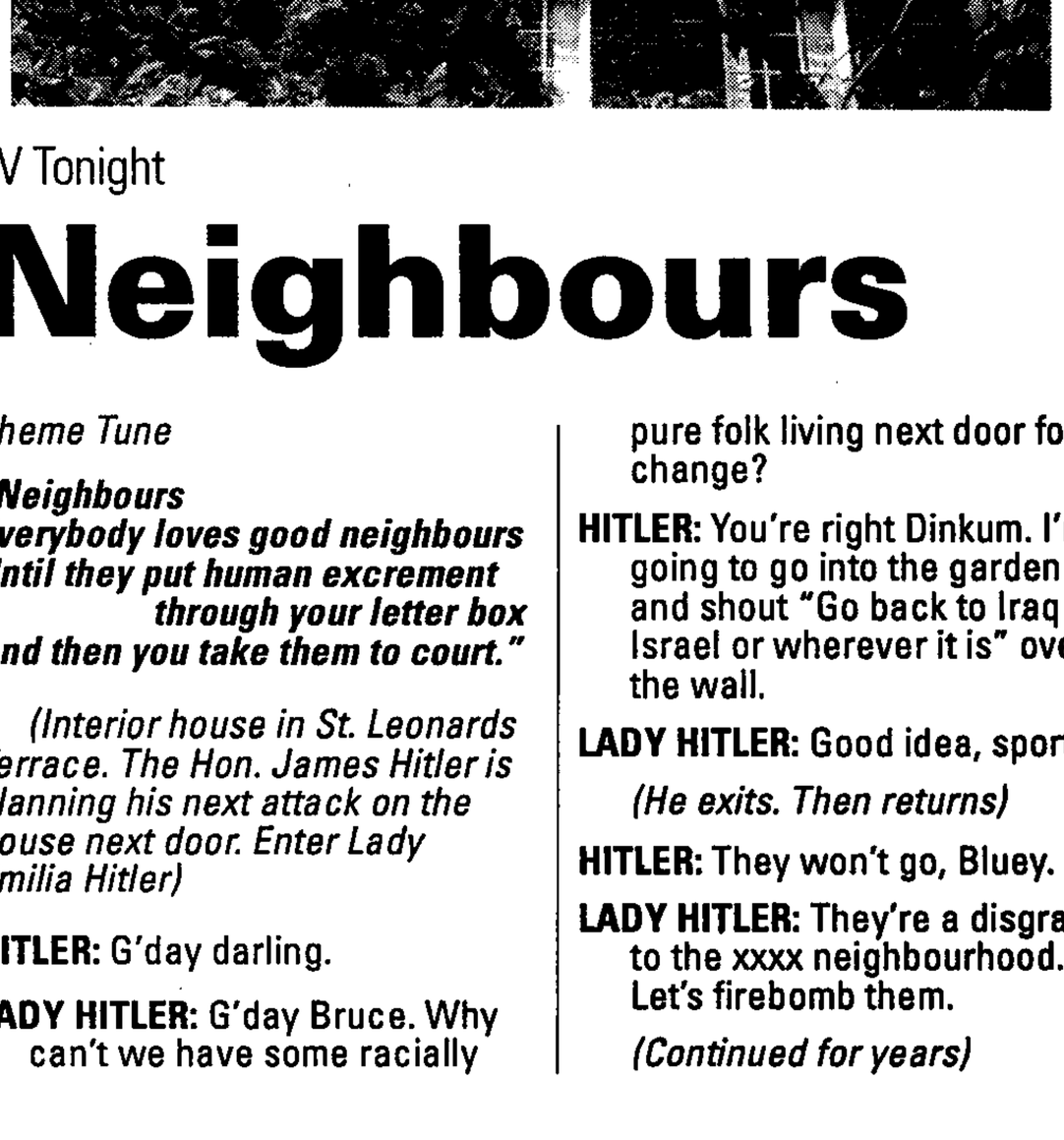
Selling Major

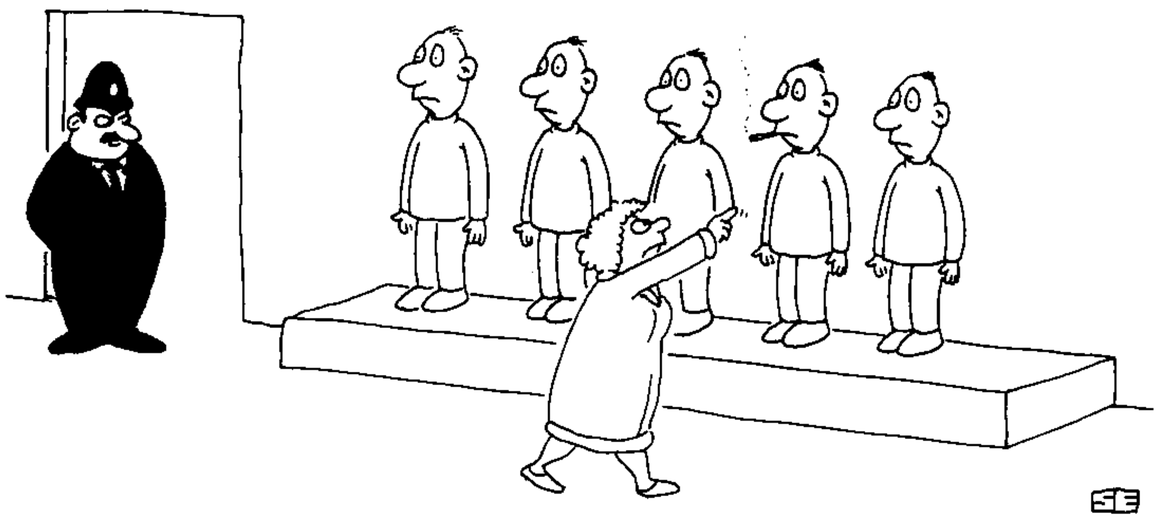
by Robert Hitler

THE incredible true-life story of how a group of experienced Conservatives were taken in by an obvious fraud, when they bought John Major under the impression he was Mrs Thatcher's replica. For weeks their excitement knew no bounds, as they fooled themselves into thinking that Major was the real thing — a 100% authenticated successor to Thatcher. Even the distinguished Tory elder statesman, Lord Whitelaw, was prepared to swear that Major was genuine. Says author Hitler: "It was collective hysteria on a massive scale. They all wanted to be taken in — even though the fake would not have fooled a child." Includes documentary footage of Thatcher addressing huge mass-rallies, and hilarious scenes in the Cabinet Room, as they realise they've made the cock-up of a decade.

CAST IN FULL

John Major ..... ALAN BENNETT
Chris Patten ..... ALEXEI SAYLE
Norma Major ..... ALISON STEADMAN
Margaret Thatcher ..... DAME EDNA EVERAGE





TV Tonight

Neighbours

Theme Tune

"Neighbours
Everybody loves good neighbours
Until they put human excrement through your letter box
And then you take them to court."

(Interior house in St. Leonards Terrace. The Hon. James Hitler is planning his next attack on the house next door. Enter Lady Emilia Hitler)

HITLER: G'day darling.

LADY HITLER: G'day Bruce. Why can't we have some racially pure folk living next door for a change?

HITLER: You're right Dinkum. I'm going to go into the garden and shout "Go back to Iraq or Israel or wherever it is" over the wall.

LADY HITLER: Good idea, sport.

(He exits. Then returns)

HITLER: They won't go, Bluey.

LADY HITLER: They're a disgrace to the xxxx neighbourhood. Let's firebomb them.

(Continued for years)

Readers Summer Caption Competition

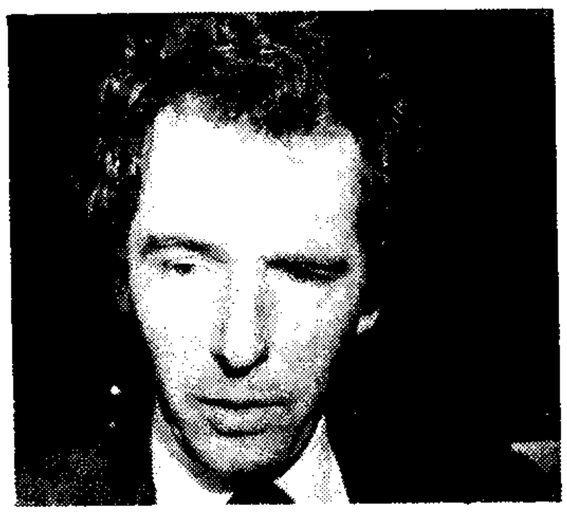
No. 94 The Welch/ Trueman Wedding

Readers are invited to write their own Bubble(s) for the picture.

First prize: 2 years' Free subscription.

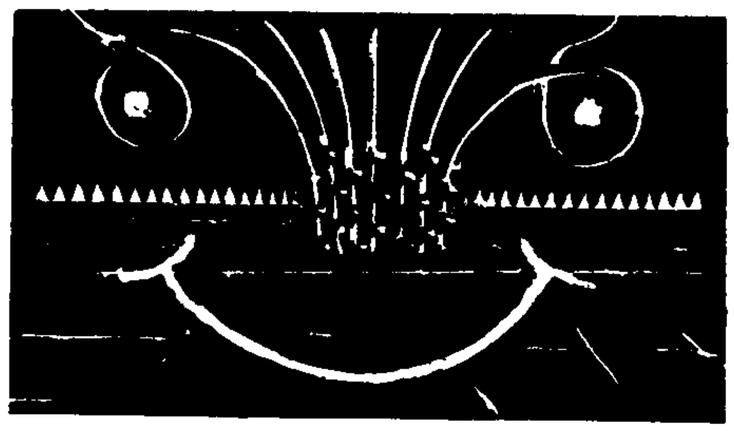
Competition ends July 31 1991.

That Waldegrave 3,819 Point Plan For A Healthier Britain In Full



1. No more fat people will be allowed by the year 2005.
2. Eating sugar in public will be a criminal offence after 1990. Passive sugar eating is known to be the major cause of heart disease in Kiribati.
3. Compulsory jogging will be phased in for all 25-44 and 53-70 year-olds, by 2003.
4. All new chairs to be fitted with approved orthopaedic legs by 1995.
5. Junior doctors will only have to work for 142 hours a week after 1997.
6. Patients will not be permitted to opt out of life before the age of 70, without a certificate signed by two Health Authority accountants.
7. Miss Fay Maschler to be put in charge of designing ambulance food.
8. Health warnings to be printed on all crisp packets, saying "Eating crisps is a major cause of death due to arterio-sclerotic infarction".
9. Total ban on pictures of Mrs Bottomley in Guardian.
10. Mr Waldegrave to look as though he's doing his job by looking as though he's doing something.
11. ...er...
12. That's it.

DIARY



HRH PRINCE PHILIP

Seventieth b'day party last week. Why on *earth* does everyone wrap their bloody presents in that ghastly coloured paper? Takes up valuable time, muck everywhere, wastes money we can ill afford. And what's that infernal sticky stuff called? Sellotape. Sello-bloody-tape. What's the *point* of it? Could someone please tell me? Eh? That's what I'd like to know. Eh? Makes whatever you're being fobbed off with — socks, handkerchiefs and other such nonsense — harder to unpack as well as buggering up the coloured paper so that it can't be reused.

Fat lot of good some of my "presents" were. Silk socks from the sister-in-law. "Do I *look* like a silk socks man? Do I? Do I? Eh?" I said, by way of thank you. Some characters can get terribly testy if you don't say your thank yous in the traditional soppy manner. I have a feeling I ruffled Margaret's feathers because she stormed out in the most goddawful huff. "Bloody hell" I said, "Operation Smooth-Over into action once again".

Stormed out after Margaret. Found her sulking in the sherry cupboard, straw already in mouth. "C'mon, old girl, chins up, wipe those tears away", I said, sympathetically. "I did the damn thank yous didn't I? I love the silk socks, love 'em." I could see she was struggling to muster a smile. "It's just that I'm not one of your damn nancy-boy cocktail guests. Who d'you think I am? Sir Roy Bloody Strong?" In my experience, such quips can be guaranteed to "smooth things over". But much to my surprise, Margaret turned on the old waterworks again, sobbing all over the shop. Happy Birthday? Happy Birthday my arse.

The ordinary bloke — or blokes! — in the street or in the place of work is always delighted to see one. A bit of a quip and a decent backslap from myself does much to boost our export drive. Humour's a great bond, I find, and I often kick off an introduction with Joe Bloggs with a humorous remark. Before getting down to brass tacks with the How-long-have-you-worked-heres and the What-exactly-do-you-dos, I like to say something a bit more personal along the lines of:

a) "Aren't you too fat for a job like this?!"

b) "Is that bloody awful pong coming from you?!"

c) "Speaka da Inglesi?!"

or, if the bloke needs to be "drawn out" a bit:

d) "I'd guess you were working class. Do you enjoy it?" Conversation pretty limited, I'd imagine, but camaraderie excellent, eh? Good show. Keep whistling." Needless to say, they love it, often letting out a great cheer as one departs."

Had Mother Teresa of Calcutta to dinner last week. Dead loss. Pecked at her food. Pooh-poohed a beer. Quiet as a nun. Her conversation wasn't going great guns: not a thing to say on carriage-driving, for instance, or grouse for that matter, and when I drew the talk round to topics of more general interest it emerged that she didn't have much too say about catamarans either. Heavy-going to say the least, so I finally plucked some of my tried and tested "puns" out of the air to set her at her ease.

"For this joke to work" I began, "You have to imagine that there's a fellow called Cal. Okay? Eh? Make myself clear? Eh? Eh? Right. This chap Cal has a young lady friend who we'll just call "Her", are you still with me? One day, Cal — you remember Cal, of course, from the beginning of the joke? You're looking pretty blank. Sometimes I don't know why I bother, I really don't. We don't *have* to give these dinner-parties, you know. We could just stay at home watching the bloody telly like everyone else. Anyway, so Cal is playing with a knife one day and — and here comes the punch-line — by mistake "CAL CUT HER". Do you see? "CAL-CUT-'ER — CALCUTTA". Eh? Eh? Oh, bloody hell. Why bother? Pass the veg then, sharpish, sharpish".

On a less lighthearted note, I have, over the course of a busy life, run up a fair number of speeches. These have been published in such books as "Preserving Birdlife: A Future For Bloodsports" (1972), "Towards A Shipshape World: Lectures On Moral Philosophy" (1981), and "Mind Your Backs: Essays on Overpopulation" (1988). but these thoughts of mine don't just come from nowhere, you know. If that's what you thought, you're even more of an imbecile than I thought. Far from it: my philosophy has emerged after many hours talking to and — almost as important — *listening* to some of the greatest philosophists of our time. David Attenborough, Sir Harry Secombe, Blashford-Snell, Lord Tony Pandy. The lot. Mind you, some of the so-called "professionals" are a dead loss. No practical ability. The other day, I snatched a bite to eat with Isaiah Berlin, the renowned philosophist. "Right", I said, "You're the great philosophist. You've tackled questions of good and bad. Let's bash a few ideas around the court. *Shorts*, for instance. Good or bad? Eh? Eh? Good or bad? Speak up! Eh?"

The old fellow obviously didn't have the foggiest. "Shorts?" He replied, "I'm sorry, what do you mean by the term 'Shorts'?"

"For crying out loud!" I said, "Shorts! Little trousers, cut off above the knee. Worn with long socks. Let the air in. *Shorts!* Do you believe in 'em, yea or nay? Good or bad? Come on! Come on!"

No idea. Face a blank. The simplest question, and not a sausage. Here's a chap who's probably prepared to prognosticate on God and Truth and Life and so on, yet he can't even make up his mind on shorts!!

Personally, I'm all for them, particularly when barbecuing. But then I'm no "intellectual" — I'm delighted to say!

Sick to death department. I'm sick to death of professional whingers living on state handouts and thinking that they have earned the god-given right to tell ordinary, decent people what's what. More often than not, you'll find that they live very comfortably, thank you, with car, house, colour TV, yacht, etcetera all paid for by the taxpayer, and getting a bit extra from their wives too, if I'm not mistaken. Yet they continue to strut around as if they owned the bloody place (and some of them weren't even born here, though we're not allowed to say that!) effing and blinding in a manner to suggest that Britain owes them a living, and, I daresay, probably inventing new surnames for themselves so as to reap additional benefits. Should this sort of person really have a say in the nation's affairs? Well, should he? Eh? Eh?

Major Major had been born too late and too mediocre. Some men are born mediocre, some men achieve mediocrity, and some men have mediocrity thrust upon them. With Major Major it had been all three. Even among men lacking all distinction he inevitably stood out as a man lacking more distinction than all the rest, and people who met him were always impressed by how unimpressive he was.

Catch 22

Yorkshire crowds have been accused of racist behaviour towards black players in recent years. But the club's new chief executive, Chris Hassell, stressed that he had imported the idea from Lancashire, where he was formerly secretary.

Daily Telegraph

2 beautiful Highland Bollocks, 1 blond, 1 red, ideal attraction around Hotels and Parks, delivery can be arranged. Offers over £325 each.

Inverness Courier

"Did I ever tell you about my operation?"

Literary Review

Dungeons drag on and on

Seeress of Kell:
Book Five of the Malloreon
David Eddings
(Bantam, £14.95)

ENJOY reading reviews of Angela Carter, Milan Kundera and William Trevor, do you? You do? Actually, it doesn't matter whether you do or you don't. Obviously, the literary editors all think you do, or they think you should. Because though these novelists don't sell a lot, they always get the main coverage in the books pages.

Seeress of Kell, on the other hand, has not been reviewed at all. Yet it is currently the bestselling hardback novel in this country — as was, last year, its equally witless predecessor, *Book Four of the Malloreon, Sorceress of Darshiva*; as were, before that, the three previous books in the series; and, before that, the five books of the previous series of associated claptrap, *The Belgariad*.

So why no reviews? Let's be fair. Obviously it wouldn't be easy to find anybody capable of getting through such tripe and then testifying to his or her response in joined-up writing. And then again, if you found a reviewer, could he — however gifted — accurately convey the book's true asinity? Could he even vestigially describe it without making it seem a lot more coherent and appealing than it is?

Seeress of Kell is a sword and sorcery book. Literally. You might think that just as shopping and fucking books aren't all about shopping and fucking — you keep getting those shamefaced digressions about relationships and stuff — that sword and sorcery books aren't just about swords and sorcery. But they are. *Sorceress of Kell* is about stabbing and tricks and nothing else.

The setting is an invented, cod-medieval world, in which the bloody forces of good are battling the bloody forces of evil. The fate of the entire universe is at stake, as per usual, and the whole caboodle is in fulfilment of some crappy old prophecy or other. There are only a few main characters on each side, well even they're not characters really, though hordes of evil gremlins, sorry "Grolims", keep cropping up to be bumped off.

There's also a dragon, a regular issue dragon — you know, the scaly, fire-breathing, flying kind. There's a jousting tournament, a trip in a sailing boat, a bundle of silly spells, many talking animals, and a number of personal appearances by "the gods".

Eddings writes for the people who find Tolkien too taxing. If he has taken any pains, it's to make his style halfwit-friendly. The only flourish is the ridiculous names. Whole sentences exist merely to display silly titles, and are repeated from book to book. From the last one, *Sorceress of Darshiva*: "Urgit, High King of Othol Murgos, sat on his garish throne in the Drojim Palace of Rak Urga." From *Seeress of Kell*: "Urgit, High King of Othol Murgos, was wearing a blue doublet and hose, and he sat up straight on his garish throne in the Drojim Palace."

The plot is equally dumb. Two magic balls, "the Orb" and "the Sardion", have to be brought together in a magic place, and this Seeress person has to choose between two contenders, the Child of Light and the Child of Dark, as to who will be God. A tough one, eh? Which is it going to be? You're right. It's the Child of Light. Even one of the characters notices it's not really much of a choice. "I can't see where all the difficulty was then. Doesn't everybody prefer the light to the dark?" "You and I might, but the Seers have always known that Light and Dark are simply opposite sides of the same thing," replies God, brightly.

But isn't this just harmless fun for the hopelessly dim? No, it ain't. It's not so harmless.

How do you explain the popularity of a book such as this? It's certainly not because it's a good read. It's a *dreadful* read, it's one of the worst reads you ever could find. The book works in the way it does on so many because it is successfully parasitic on pre-existing needs.

Essentially, it is perverted religion. Eddings has invented a mythology and his readers have swallowed it. L. Ron Hubbard began as a writer of rubbishy science fiction and only opportunistically turned his fantasies into a cult when he realised that his readers might be induced to take it seriously.

Eddings isn't up to that — but the appeal of his fiction is to the same starved appetite for mythology and the supernatural that makes people vulnerable to anybody with the crassness to offer to feed it. You don't need to do it coherently, tastefully, sensibly. Eddings does it on as low a level as you'll meet. Compared to some of the competition, indeed, his very ineptitude makes him less offensive than he might be. William Horwood's Ducton trilogy, another religiose fantasy bestseller, was all about *moles* (talpids, not spies) and ended with an actual mole crucifixion, and a mole ascension into heaven, all of which Horwood managed to imbue with sickening intensity.

Edding's pastiche of the Bible is merely incompetent — "Know ye that all adown the endless avenues of time hath division marred all that is — for there is division at the very heart of creation", and so, poopily, forth. His attempts to make his story eternally significant are simply laughable — "You may know," explains his hero with typical woodenness, "that from time to time in the past there have been meetings between the Child of Light and the Child of Dark. We're going to the last one there's ever going to be. The meeting's going to decide the fate of the world." Oh, right, better pay attention.

Eddings, presumably through native numbness, manages to churn out this garbage without lapsing into facetiousness himself. And that alone is enough to sell his books on an enormous scale. His success is built on his readers' emotional and intellectual deprivation, but who cares? Let them fight dragons.

CLAPPED-OUT AS AN IDEA PERHAPS, DAVID EDDINGS, BUT THERE'S STILL MILEAGE IN OUR DRAGONS
THÖJ LAGERLOUT, THE 3-HEADED USED-DRAGON SALESMAN OF BARF
WITH GALLBLADDER, THE OBLIGATORY DWARF, AND NJBK, THE ONE-EYED DUNGEON-MASTER

Books & Bookmen

☐ **RICHARD Lloyd Parry, journalist and travel writer, was sent by the *Evening Standard* to cover the party Macdonald threw at the Groucho Club last week to celebrate publication of Mike Molloy's new novel, *The Gallery*.**

He chatted to the assembled literati, including Derek Jameson, Keith Waterhouse and his creature Jeffrey Bernard and the Rigid Man, but was a little surprised to see the mysterious Groucho pilferer and alleged diary person Nicholas Brooks (see Grovel, *Eyes* 767, 768) in earnest conversation with David Owen.

When asked what paper he represented, Brooks ducked the question and confided that his first novel was being published in October. "Who is publishing it?" asked Dr Death courteously. Brooks confessed that he couldn't remember the name of his publisher. "Is it Macdonald?" asked the imaginative doctor. "Yes, yes; it's Macdonald," replied the overjoyed erstwhile hack.

■ IT MIGHT have been thought that the long news story in the *Sundry Times*, accompanied by the lavish photograph of boatperson and novelist Clare Francis, to the effect that Octopus was daringly cocking a snook at the revered Net Book Agreement and publishing its lead autumn titles at non net prices would have been picked up by other papers. In fact it is a non-story.

Octopus, like any other publisher, can decree whether books are sold net or non net and after that it is up to the bookseller. Octopus has not informed the authors mentioned (including Clare Francis, Douglas Adams, Sue Townsend, David Lodge, Colin Thubron) and it cannot happen without their blessing.

☐ *MORE TROUBLE at HarperCollins. When Murdoch's men moved into Bangkok House in Hammersmith they set about trying to sublet the eight separate buildings around London where, until then, disparate components of the group had worked. All eight offices remain untenanted and are costing "Arturo" Eddie a small fortune.*

'Bookworm'

Electricity privatisation

Pylon the profits

RECESSION-HIT consumers, already furious at the huge salary increases of the chairmen of the privatised water and telephone monopolies, will be further delighted by the National Grid's announcement of even bigger electricity profits than expected: at £385 million on a turnover of £1,144 million, a very public spirited 34 percent.

The figures were sufficiently high to embarrass even the Grid and it presented its accounts in two ways: the traditional "historical cost accounting"; and the alternative "current cost accounting" method which takes profits down to a modest £237 million. Coyly, it tries to give prominence to the lower figure — something not usually done by companies when announcing profits.

The Grid desperately wants to avoid outrage from the public which "sold" it last year when the industry was privatised. It is also hoping not to arouse too many protests from environmentalists who think that if the Grid had a ha'porth of social conscience it would be using its winnings to bury more of its power lines underground and dismantle the pylons which litter the countryside.

The Grid is also aware that Frank Dobson, the opposition energy spokesman, has declared his intention to renationalise the Grid in order to regain control of the whole industry on the cheap. It would only encourage him if the Grid shouted too loudly about its profitability.

The Grid is a private monopoly and there is no pretence from any quarter that it faces any competition. It is owned by the 12 regional electricity companies (RECs) and it would be impossible for independent generators, who are tiddlers by comparison with National Power or PowerGen, to set up a rival network. The price the Grid charges for its delivery service is controlled by a complicated formula in the privatisation legislation and it has, plainly, been pitched far too high.

Among those watching with interest are the Major Energy Users' Council, representing the biggest companies in Britain. Their director, Andrew Bainbridge, commented that the Grid seemed to be a licence to print money. "It is difficult for us to sit back calmly and watch an enormous amount of money being made at the expense of the consumer. Here we are in a recession and all the privatised companies seem to be coining it. Something has gone wrong.

"We do feel that we are being exploited. We do feel that these guys look at the legislation and then say 'How can we get round it in order to make the maximum amount of money for our shareholders?' The supplier has tremendous power and he holds sway. There is need for much tighter vigilance. What we feel as users is that nothing really has changed. These companies are not really very efficient. There is so much waste if you look at the way they use money and the way they use people. They are not well run."

Meanwhile students of the electricity industry are impatient to know which of the 12 RECs will dare to be the first to announce its results and, in particular, the pay of its chairmen. The rumours are that they have given themselves colossal rises and all hope one of the others will announce its figures first. Those arousing particular interest are Eastern (chairman, Jim Smith); Southern (Duncan Ross) and East Midlands (John Harris).

Medical experiments

Pounds or guineas pigs?

BRITAIN may be short of hospital beds, but we are showing encouraging signs of growth in the human experimentation market.

The huge American Corning Corporation is relocating part of its operations, its Clinical Pharmacology Institute currently located in Dublin, to Leeds. The short hop across the Irish Sea is worth the effort because of the lack of controls on clinical testing in Britain.

The CPI started life as the Biological and Medical Research Centre, a wholly-owned subsidiary of notorious Swiss multinational Hoffman La Roche. In 1980 La Roche sold out to an Irish physician, Dr Austin Darragh, who changed the company's name to the impressive sounding Institute of Clinical Pharmacology. Under Darragh, the institute quickly expanded, adding most of the world's pharmaceutical companies to its client list, although La Roche remained the biggest user of its services.

The institute's speciality was the testing of experimental drugs on live patients. While sparing rabbits, beagles and rats, it does, however, require a constant stream of human volunteers. Inevitably those who signed up needed the money badly, and Dr Darragh spent much of the last decade refuting suggestions that his institute recruited from the most vulnerable sections of society. Newspapers were sent a flurry of solicitors' letters and the occasional writ, and on the surface prospects for the company looked fine.

Darragh floated his institute on NASDAQ, the American third market, and in the late eighties shares traded as high as $7.50 each. But the success story was harder to sustain after the death of one of the volunteers. Niall Rush, a student, died on the institute's austere premises in the grounds of Dublin's St James's Hospital, following his participation in a series of trials in return for a cash payment.

The publicity surrounding the death did little to help the institute's image and the normally lax Irish laws governing such procedures were tightened up. The institute moved to new multi-million pound premises elsewhere in Dublin and an impressive board of directors, including local luminaries and Ronald Reagan's former health secretary Margaret Heckler, was appointed, with shareholders being promised continued growth.

Last year, however, the institute collapsed owing several million dollars and leading to the suspension of its share quote, the resignation of key directors and demands from shareholders for an inquiry into alleged violations of American corporate law. Subsequently the entire Dublin centre was sold to the Corning Corporation, whose G.H. Besselaar subsidiary is now planning to move the Irish testing business to its operation in Leeds.

The move, however, is only the latest, if most significant expansion of human testing in Britain. The National Union of Students has noted a continual growth in the number of students signing up for trials. But why should companies based in America, providing test results for industries largely located on the Rhine test their products on humans here? Quite simply because controls, and thus costs, are lower in Britain than almost anywhere else in the developed world.

Fraud

Whitehill mandarins?

FOLLOWING the recent four-year jail sentence for fraud handed out to Nicholas Young, the 60-odd investors who were fleeced by him are poised to issue a writ claiming negligence against Clark Whitehill, the London partner of Clark Kenneth Leventhal, the international accountancy group for which Young worked as an executive.

Although Clark Whitehill has denied any liability for what Young did — illegally and off his own bat — while operating out of the Clark Whitehill office, the investors have obtained a legal opinion from leading commercial barrister Anthony Scrivener QC recommending that they have a strong claim.

From 1974 to 1990, Young was international executive officer of Clark Kenneth Leventhal (previously Clark Gardner Wolf and Company), a job which enabled him to put himself forward to investors as an expert in matters of international finance.

Over the years he persuaded investors to put money into an international fund he claimed to administer. Because Clark Kenneth Leventhal was an international partnership, he explained, money could be held offshore and shuffled around to take advantage of extraordinarily high interest rates in places such as Hong Kong.

The story was not always the same. Sometimes he said the fund was primarily for his family, friends and charities to invest in; on other occasions he gave the impression that the fund was available to him as a result of his work with CKL. He usually told investors that the fund was sanctioned by CKL and, certainly, CKL knew that he was doing business on his own behalf out of the Clark Whitehill office for the simple reason that he paid them a £1,000 per month rent for the office space.

In fact Young was dipping into the "international fund" to subsidise his expensive lifestyle and in particular his habit of betting on horses. From 1985 to 1990 he placed bets worth £10.9 million, but he only got back £8.7 million. He was able to keep the fund going for so long because he ran it as a Ponzi scheme (investors wishing to take money out of the fund were paid with the money of other investors).

CKL did not know Young was a fraudster. It did, however, know that Young was not a licensed deposit-taker. Yet the business of his "international fund" was conducted by either Young or his assistant executive officer Pauline Mills, also a CKL employee; letters to investors went out with the CKL letterhead; reports were accompanied by CKL compliments slips; and statements showing the fund's claimed performance were printed on the CKL telex machine. Indeed, CKL provided Young with every facility he needed to convey respectability.

CKL's Swedish partner Bengt Bangstad and his firm Bangstad Revisionsbyra invested in Young's fund. And not only this, but some senior partners of Clark Whitehill, in particular Frederick Van Zweeden and Shirley Mitchard, were present at meetings where Young discussed the "international fund" with potential investors, thereby appearing to give their implicit approval.

According to the QC's opinion, Clark Whitehill and CKL behaved in a way that was grossly negligent in several respects. They allowed Young, with no professional qualifications as an accountant, to present himself to investors as an expert working for a reputable association of accountants. They took his rent money for office space without making thorough inquiries as to the precise nature of his business (one of Clark Whitehill's senior partners, Brian Worth, knew Young was borrowing substantial sums but didn't ask why), and they failed to conduct the most elementary checks (standard practice in most accountancy firms where outgoing correpsondence is vetted by a senior partner) on the activities of an employee doing private business out of their office premises.

If they had sneaked a glance at the books of Young's "international fund", which were stored at Clark Whitehill, the fraud would have almost certainly have become known to them. CKL's own rules lay down that member firms should have a proper system of quality control, but this rule was not applied in the case of Young.

Scrivener argues that a reputable firm of accountants would answer yes, if asked in evidence whether, upon learning that their premises were being used contrary to the Banking Act for the purposes of unlicensed deposit-taking, they would have realised that investors might suffer.

Clark Whitehill and CKL have refused to make an offer of settlement to Young's investors and are waiting to be taken to court.

Does this square with CKL's American partner Kenneth Leventhal's statement to an investor earlier in the saga: "We are not the sort of company that does not face up to its responsibilities."?

In the City

AFTER Harrods Bank, how long will it be before the Bank of England seizes the Bank of Credit & Commerce International nettle?

Week by week evidence mounts from across the Atlantic of BCCI's illegal activities. The list that began with the nurturing of Noriega and the laundering of drug money has lengthened to include covert control of not one or two but three US banks; syphoning of cash from one bank, First American, to pad its own profits; window dressing the balance sheet of the failing Centrust Savings & Loan institution whose collapse could cost the US taxpayer more than $2 billion.

Equally expanding are the number of US agencies investigating BCCI — the Manhattan district attorney, a Miami grand jury and the Federal Reserve Board have recently been joined by the Justice Department plus the reawakened Senate Foreign Relations Committee. And that only covers BCCI's American activities. An examination of the more than 70 countries in which BCCI operated demonstrates one common factor — countries whose political and business leaders wanted to have their or other people's money in another country. Switzerland, Luxembourg, the Caymans — BCCI could oblige in any one of these favoured funk holes for the rich and infamous.

While all this went down the ever accommodating BCCI was based in London, authorised and supposedly regulated by the Bank of England. So much for regulation.

But what is the Bank doing now, given the feeding frenzy of US regulatory investigation? As ever the Bank isn't saying. But, as suggested in the last *Eye*, the case of A (for BCCI founder Agha Hasan Abedi?) and Others v B Bank (for guess who!) indicates it has finally woken up to the need to do something.

On 26 April the Bank served notice on BCCI that it required certain documents relating to the New York and Federal Reserve investigations into BCCI's secret ownership of the First American group and banks in California and Georgia. The Bank sought these documents under powers relating to its sole responsibility to authorise banks to operate in Britain. Roger Barnes, head of supervision, declared reassuringly that such scandals as the US investigations had unearthed were "of concern" to the Bank. As no doubt was BCCI's guilty plea to money laundering.

What happens now the high court has ruled BCCI must give the Bank the documents it wants, pending any appeal, remains to be seen. Little was done after the money laundering plea other than talk about greater supervision. Now that the US has decreed BCCI unfit to operate there, the question for the Bank of England should be how long the Luxembourg registered Bank of Cocaine, Conmen and Imposters should be allowed to stay here.

WITH THE takeover bid for Cowan de Groot from Wilton Group and his role at SelectTV, chartered accountant Michael Buckley is very much back on the scene. It all seems a long way from the circumstances of his sudden departure from a previous bout of City stardom.

Buckley, a protegé of Oliver Jessel and Jim Slater, hit the headlines in the early seventies running Dundee Perth & London Securities. He ended up owning most of the Falkland Islands. All this came to a less than happy end in 1974 when Buckley resigned following the takeover of Dundee by Charrington, Gardner, Locket. Buckley left after the Charrington board discovered Dundee had lost £300,000 on undisclosed commodity deals.

Buckley resurfaced without too much success in the late seventies at York Trust, then in 1981 he emerged to take part in the long-running pass-the-share-parcel game at Benlox Holdings. His stay there was somewhat rudely interrupted in 1983 when he was arrested and charged with making a false statement to the Inland Revenue. The charge related to that £300,000 "loss" made by Dundee playing the cocoa market and a clever tax avoidance scheme based on "paper" losses sold by the Rossminster group.

The Revenue alleged that while Dundee had reported a loss, which Buckley had arranged for it to make, a similar profit less fees made its way to a Gibraltar trust which found it in its heart to loan a similar sum interest free via the Isle of Man to Buckley.

Buckley was acquitted at an Old Bailey trial in November 1983. He denied that his reply to a Revenue inquiry had been deliberately false. When asked about the Gibraltar trust the accountant said he thought the phrase "on your behalf" meant "for your own benefit". Doubtless this innocent confusion arose because the trust was of the discretionary variety and Buckley had no control over the trustees.

Three years ago Buckley surfaced once again. This time it was at Wilton, since when it has been like old times. Once 10p, the shares are now just above 2p.

DO JUDGES take fraud seriously? Part Three.: Two weeks after fellow Ponzi (circular money) scheme operator Nicholas Young was weighed off with four years for swindling £3-6 million from 60 investors, along came Robert Miller to plead guilty to swindling the 230 clients of Dunsdale Securities out of £6-8 million. But while Young faced the Old Bailey, Miller was shuffled off to its second division satellite, Snaresbrook — a court renowned for leniency.

And so it came to pass. Despite admitting that he had known he was doing wrong for 12 years; despite robbing people he knew personally, many of them elderly; despite squandering investors money on a high burn luxury life style; despite, in Judge Andrew Brooks's words carrying out an "extremely well planned fraud which you executed with a great deal of skill" — despite all that, Miller was jailed for just six years. He will expect to serve less than two given a previous period in custody.

According to Judge Brooks — who was given the traditional white collar criminal defence treatment about the contrite ruined man with the disturbed mental state — the sentence was to mark "public disapproval for this kind of behaviour".

Well two years in an open prison may not seem quite disapproving enough for a man who enjoyed 12 years of the good life at the expense of those who trusted him with their savings — especially as if not the hapless blind, deaf and dumb regulators FIMBRA but the taxpayer, via the equally brain dead Department of Timidity and Inaction, may end up paying compensation to the Dunsdale victims.

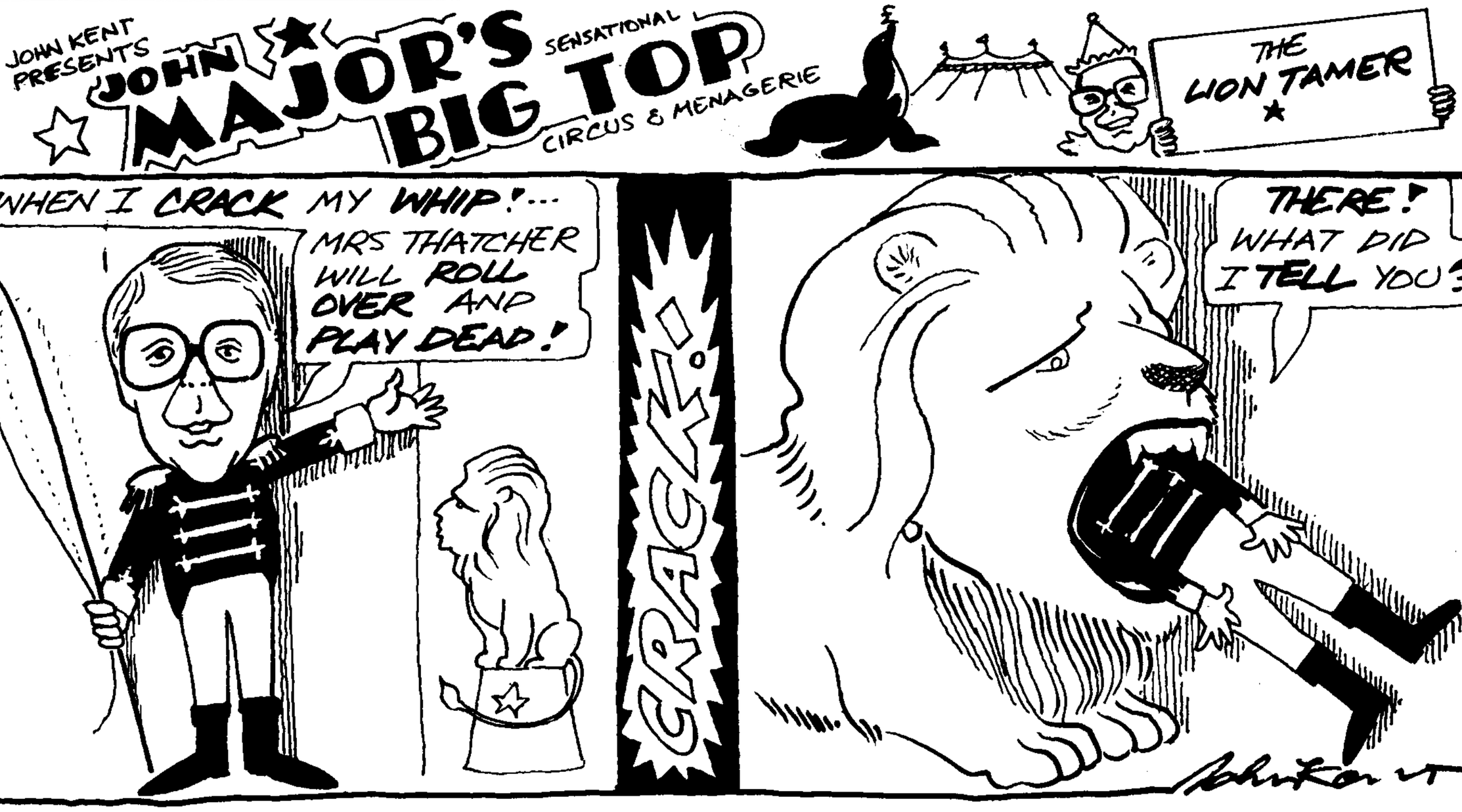
A somewhat more relevant tariff might be considered that being enforced on those convicted in the US Savings & Loan scandal. So far nine of the 11 S & L officials to be jailed have been sentenced to terms of 10 to 40 years. American judges, it seems, do indeed take fraud seriously.

NOBODY should be at all surprised at the Serious Farce Office's decision not to launch a major investigation of the £200 million losses suffered by the Outhwaite syndicates or indeed any other scandal at Lloyd's.

The SFO learned its lesson with Alexander Howden and PCW. After years of investigations and probably millions in costs it lost one case against Howden's Kenneth Grob and swallowed another kicked out as too old. With PCW's Peter Cameron-Webb and Peter Dixon it never even managed to get them into court due to missing the extradition window.

Ever since the Outhwaite inquiry was first disclosed in March, the SFO has merely been going through the motions. After Howden no one wanted to risk trying to explain reinsurance to the usual Old Bailey jury. And after PCW no one wanted to spend years probing complex insurance arrangements overseas whose origins were already well past their prosecute by date. So it was just a case of waiting for sufficient time to elapse before once again Lloyd's could be filed in the "no further action" basket.

'Slicker'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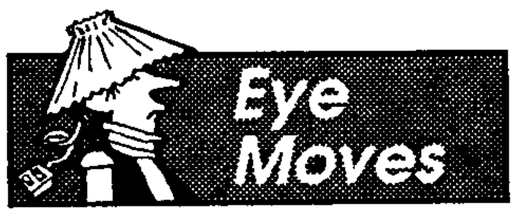

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PROFESSIONAL MALE, 34, 6', slim, humorous, caring, sporty, seeks slim, humorous, 25-35 year old female for friendly relationship to share good times. Photo/letter appreciated. London/SE area. Box 8570.

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UNUSUAL SENSUAL female, seeks successful, mature "gentle" man who loves weekend country life and who would be content being adored by just one woman. Photo please — only sincere letters — I promise replies. Box 5370.

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SMOULDERING MAN needs female match, tall, 29, slightly eccentric, funny chap, seeks humorous, lovable woman for picnics and adventures. Photo appreciated. North West. Box 5970.

ELEGANT, ATTRACTIVE, tall, slim, mid 30s, equestrienne, nearly untied, seeking fun and romance, ideally longterm, with successful, kind, loving man, juvenile humour and easy on the eye. Letter/photo. Sussex. Box 6070.

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WOODY ALLEN, shy, 26, seeks "Diane Keaton", 26-33, for "Annie Hall"-style romance. Essex/East London. Non-Smoker. Box 12269.

ATTRACTIVE fun loving girl, 29. Busy professional and personal life. Seeks intelligent, fun man, 30-40 to replace the missing magic in her life. Phone and photo please. London. Box 3570.

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CHEERFUL CHAP, successful professional, 36, considerate and loyal but single, seeks intelligent witty lady, 28+, possibly career-minded, to share life, fun and the future. Box 12469.

OXBRIDGE ARTS GRADUATE seeks female companion for 2-3 weeks cycling holiday July/August anywhere in Europe. Box 12569.

WITTY CHRISTIAN seeker regrets all correspondence lost. Anyone forgiving and still interested please re-contact. Sincere apologies otherwise. Box 12669.

ATTRACTIVE PROFESSIONAL lady, 30, interested in healing arts seeks educated male for friendship/romance. Photo appreciated. London/Herts. Box 13869.

SCORPIAN SINGLE male, 47, tall, distinguished, good looks, professional status, seeks attractive, similar, sexually aware lady with no ties to share romantic, wide interest future together. Midlands. ALA. Box 3670.

INTELLIGENT, attractive, independent lady, late 50s, living New Forest coasts seeks supportive, educated man of similar background to care for and share interests. Travel, sailing, gardening, food, bridge, going out and about. Life? Photograph and telephone number, please. Box 3770.

DESIGNER, 39, not in panic mode, seeks attractive lady for cultural and other activities. Separated, childminding weekends, but available all week. London. Box 3870.

NATUROPATH needs female therapist for nature cure practice. Box 3970.

BORING OLD FART but very amiable, 37, in need of good woman. N.E. England. Box 4070.

HANDSOME BACHELOR, Yorkshireman, 38, seeks warm, busty older lady. Box 4170.

INTELLIGENT, HANDSOME louche slob needs taking in hand. Any offers welcome. Box 4270.

DAFTISH, LEFTISH bloke (25). Degree and own teeth — seeks slinky, attractive woman (18-25) for cuddles, etc. NW preferably, but anywhere. Photo please. Box 4370.

WIDOWER, 54, seeks live-in girlfriend, 18-40 who values home life and security to share his house in Kent. Status, nationality, immaterial. Box 4470.

GRADUATE MALE, 31, single, attractive and London based, seeks similar female for caring relationship. Box 4570.

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ATTRACTIVE, MATURE woman, sought by genuine, goodlooking guy, 30. Passionate, fun days and nights promised. Photo and phone ensures you hear my voice. Box 6670.

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DISCREET GENTLEMAN, 30s, tall, blonde, slim, handsome and wealthy seeks attractive lady for mutual indulgence. Box 8870.

SEXY SINGLE MUM seeks rich erotic husband. Oxford/London. Box 8970.

INTERESTING, good looking, mid-50s male seeks attractive, articulate, gentle younger female for occasional forays into his lair. Status immaterial. Frank letter and photo to Box 9070.

SAFELY MARRIED lady seeking civilized diversions from domesticity sought by educated safely married East Anglian company director. (49). Box 9170.

LONDON MALE (41) passionate, likes travel, cinema and cooking. Seeks dream woman. Photo please. Box 9270.

BATMAN SEEKS Vicky Vale for food and thought. Photo appreciated. Box 9370.

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INTELLIGENT SURVEYOR, 46, unhappily tied, discreet, seeks fun loving lady for romance and to cherish on summer afternoons. Surrey/South East. Box 9870.

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KIND GENTLE CHAP, young 40, seeks discreet lady for friendship and cuddles. Sussex. Box 10170.

ELEGANT, oriental lady, 28, slim, attractive, fashionable, sophisticated graduate, intelligent, witty, fun-loving, professional seeks similar tall, romantic, caring gentleman for romance, relationship. Photo, telephone number appreciated. London. Box 10270.

TALL, SPORTY, professional London man, 40, seeks to spoil attractive, slim young lady, similarly married or just naughty or both, in discreet, fun relationship. Box 10370.

ASTROLOGY MINDED male, 41, with sea washed blue eyes, missing compatible female seeking ultimate prize, Glasgow, The World. Box 10470.

CRUMPET, 30 something seeks bold, intelligent man for days of passion. Discretion sought and guaranteed. Photo and phone number please. Yorks. Box 10570.

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LIKEABLE, INTERESTING, single guy, graduate, 36, slim, 5'10", seeks similar woman, thirties, preferably New Zealander, Australian. Box 15370.

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REMARKABLY HANDSOME tall, upmarket, educated, sincere male, 43, seeks tallish, attractive woman for discreet friendship. London. Box 11470.

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HUMANITARIAN, qualified nurse, retired, 56 yrs young. Attractive, petite, blonde, outgoing, travelled, gentle. Living Kent. Seeks company of financially secure person. Box 11670.

TALL, BLOND, attractive, professional male, 28, temporarily insolvent/divorced, loves cars, music, wild times, Harleys, seeks beautiful, wealthy, fun loving woman to recreate Levi's 501 Joker advert and more! Photo please. Box 13970.

AMUSING, PRETTY, very intelligent brunette, 25, 5'5", seeks stimulating male equal, 25-35, 5'10"+, for fun nights out or in. London/Surrey. Photo appreciated. Box 14070.

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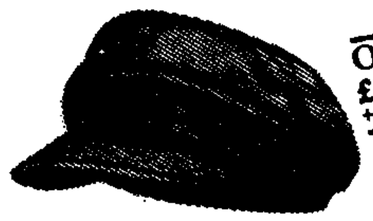

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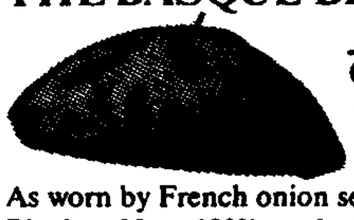

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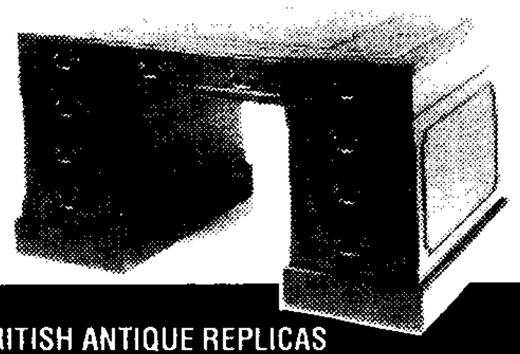

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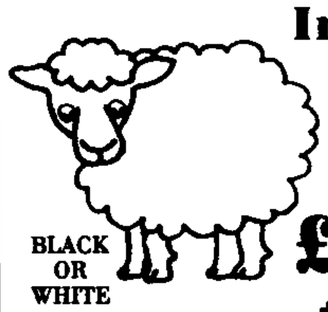

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